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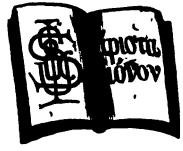
EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION ON METHODS OF STUDY

BY

FRED N. SCOTT, PH.D.

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PREFACE.

Although a cheap edition of Johnson's "Rasselas" stands in small need of recommendation to teachers of English literature, a few words regarding the characteristic features of the present volume may not be entirely out of place.

1. *The Text.* —The standard text of Rasselas, or at all events the most carefully edited text which has appeared up to the present time, is that issued in 1879 from the Clarendon Press, Oxford. The same plates, without change in any particular, were used in G. Birkbeck Hill's edition of 1887. This text, in all its essential features, is the one here reproduced. The most noticeable departures from it will be found in the orthography, which has been made to conform to American usage, and in two verbal corrections, called for by the context and sanctioned by the Oxford edition of 1825. These last consist in the substitution of "could" for "can," line 3, p. 180, and of "offers" for "offered," line

26, p. 191. In speaking of these small matters, it is assumed that, other things being equal, a text representing Johnsonian usage will be preferred to one which represents the caprice of the editor or of the typesetter.[1]

2. *The Introduction.* — Three short essays have been placed at the beginning of the book. One, a sketch of Johnson's life, is for students who cannot by any possibility get access to other and more extensive biographical materials; a second, on methods of study, is intended to be suggestive to teachers and to encourage them to exercise independence in the planning of classroom work; a third, on aids to the study of "Rasselas," will, it is hoped, be found of service to teacher and student alike wherever proper library facilities are not lacking.

3. *The Notes.* — These, purposely reduced to very small compass, have been made still more compact, where possible, by grouping together cognate subjects under a single head. Johnson's peculiarities of diction, for example, have been arranged in alphabetical order and called Note 1. The references are made by means of raised figures in the text. It is coming to be evident

[1] The existence of no less than five hundred errors of the grossest character in a popular edition of "Rasselas" which appears under the sanction of a noted English scholar, should emphasize the value of a trustworthy text.

to all progressive teachers of English literature that the introduction of reference libraries into our high schools is bringing about a rapid shrinkage in the value of miscellaneous annotation. The notes of the present volume may be taken as representing one stage in the process of eliminating waste material.

FRED N. SCOTT.

ANN ARBOR, MICH., November 15, 1891.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

THERE are men celebrated in the world of literature about whose personal characteristics we know almost nothing at all. We know so little of the most famous of the ancients, Homer, that we cannot be sure any such man ever existed. We know so little about Shakespeare, the most famous of the moderns, that certain persons of our day, perhaps not the wisest persons of our day, have ventured to deny to him the authorship of his own works. But Dr. Samuel Johnson, the author of the "History of Rasselas," is not one of these vague personalities, these dusky shadows whom we see flitting through the twilight of a distant past. Thanks to his biographer, Boswell, readers can know as much about Johnson, at one period of his life, as about the most bewritten, the most persistently interviewed, of the public men of to-day. He can know even more; for no interviewer of our time possesses the rare ability, which was Boswell's, of revealing in every deft touch of description, in every scrap of anecdote and shred of conversation, the inmost character of the man whose life he is reporting. Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is one of those books that every man, at some time in his life, should find leisure to read through from cover to cover. There he will see, drawn with infinite patience and minuteness of detail, the character which here can be sketched only in rough outlines.

Samuel Johnson was born on the 18th of September, 1709, in Lichfield, a small town about a hundred miles northwest of London. He was a sickly child, inheriting disorders that made his life, after his twentieth year, one long misery. Disease left its mark upon both mind and body. One serious effect of his ailments was loss of sight in one eye; another was a sort of St. Vitus' dance which at intervals forced him, wherever he might be, to perform a series of ridiculous motions with feet and hands; a third result was a disposition, which sometimes came dangerously near insanity, of profound melancholy. Notwithstanding these maladies, Johnson, unlike Pope, grew into a man of huge bulk and enormous strength. It is related of him that once, finding a stranger in his chair at the theatre, he picked up both man and chair and threw them into the pit. But he never learned to wield his strength with grace, and remained all his life, in outward appearance, clumsy, awkward, and uncouth.

The son of a bookseller, Johnson picked up, among the volumes in his father's shop, the beginning of a vast store of miscellaneous information. His memory was remarkable. He seemed to absorb without effort whatever came in his way. At the age of eighteen, when he went to Oxford, he knew, so he afterwards said, as much as at fifty-three. He remained but fourteen months at the University — months of bitterness, poverty, and seclusion. "I was miserably poor," was his report of it years afterwards, "and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit." He was as proud as he was poor, and once when some unknown friend left a pair of new shoes at his door, indignantly flung them away. In 1731, when his father died, leaving to his son an inheritance of but twenty pounds, Johnson was thrown upon his own resources. For some years he lived, as Boswell characterized one period of it, a life of "complicated misery." For a time

he taught in a grammar school, where he was wholly unsuccessful. Now and then he had a chance to do a little writing. His first publication, a translation of Father Lobo's "Travels in Abyssinia," is of peculiar significance for this sketch, inasmuch as it suggested the idea and supplied some of the material for the story of Rasselas. The translation, published in 1735, brought in to the translator a little over threepence a page, a sum total of five guineas. In the same year Johnson married a widow twenty years his senior, whose only recommendations, so far as his friends could see, were that she appreciated his talents and was possessed of a small sum of money. The money was probably soon spent in an unfortunate attempt to found a boys' school at Edial, near Lichfield. At one time but three pupils were in attendance at the "academy," one of the three, however, being that David Garrick who is now remembered as the most eminent of English actors. When, after a year and a half, the unsuccessful venture was abandoned, Johnson, with Garrick as his companion, set out for London, in order, as his letter of introduction read, "to try his fate with a tragedy, and to see to get himself employed in some translation." He could not well have sought employment worse paid or more precarious. The lives of poor and unbefriended writers in the great metropolis were at this period miserable in the extreme. The prices paid by the publishers for the work of such men was less than that paid to ordinary day-laborers. The hope of most authors was fixed upon pleasing some wealthy man by dedicating a book to him, thus securing a patron who would give money to his flatterer as to an object of charity. To ignoble devices of this sort, Johnson, always of an independent spirit, maintained an unconquerable aversion. His only resource was hard, unremitting labor, and to this his sluggish, indolent nature was constitutionally indisposed. Living in a

wretched garret when he could afford it, or walking the street when he could not, at times in dread of arrest and imprisonment for debt, hungry, ill-clad, ill-paid, despised, Johnson endured for nearly a score of years all the horrors of Grub Street. Years afterward he could not speak of that period of his life without bursting into tears. His hardships left a permanent impress upon his habits both of mind and of body. The appearance and character of the man when he had at last worked his way from obscurity to fame, from the companionship of the penniless and the outcast to intercourse on a common footing with men of wealth and distinction, are thus graphically portrayed by Macaulay: —

"Johnson came among them the solitary specimen of a past age, the last survivor of the genuine race of Grub Street hacks; the last of that generation of authors whose abject misery and whose dissolute manners had furnished inexhaustible matter to the satirical genius of Pope. From nature he had received an uncouth figure, a diseased constitution, and an irritable temper. The manner in which the earlier years of his manhood had been passed had given to his demeanor, and even to his moral character, some peculiarities appalling to the civilized beings who were the companions of his old age. The perverse irregularity of his hours, the slovenliness of his person, his fits of strenuous exertion, interrupted by long intervals of sluggishness, his strange abstinence, and his equally strange voracity, his active benevolence, contrasted with the constant rudeness and the occasional ferocity of his manners in society, made him, in the opinion of those with whom he lived during the last twenty years of his life, a complete original. An original he was, undoubtedly, in some respects. But if we possessed full information concerning those who shared his early hardships, we should probably find that what we call his singularities of manner were, for the

most part, failings which he had in common with the class to which he belonged. He ate at Streatham Park as he had been used to eat at St. John's Gate, when he was ashamed to show his ragged clothes. He ate as it was natural that a man should eat, who, during the greater part of his life, had passed the morning in doubt whether he should have food for the afternoon. The habits of his early life had accustomed him to bear privations with fortitude, but not to taste pleasure with moderation. He could fast; but when he did not fast, he tore his dinner like a famished wolf, with the veins swelling on his forehead, and the perspiration running down his cheeks. He scarcely ever took wine. But when he drank it, he drank it greedily and in large tumblers. These were, in fact, mitigated symptoms of that same moral disease which raged with such deadly malignity in his friends Savage and Boyse. The roughness and violence which he showed in society were to be expected from a man whose temper, not naturally gentle, had been long tried by the bitterest calamities, by the want of meat, of fire, and of clothes, by the importunity of creditors, by the insolence of booksellers, by the derision of fools, by the insincerity of patrons, by that bread which is the bitterest of all food, by those stairs which are the most toilsome of all paths, by that deferred hope which makes the heart sick. Through all these things the ill-dressed, coarse, ungainly pedant had struggled manfully up to eminence and command."

Much of Johnson's literary work during this long struggle for recognition and a livelihood was done for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a periodical still in existence; but these articles being unsigned, as was then the custom, brought him no reputation. Still his fame was growing all through this period of his life. A satire entitled "London," published in book form in 1738, attracted the attention of Pope. Ten years later a

second satire, "The Vanity of Human Wishes," was fairly well received. The *Rambler*, a series of essays after the type set by the *Spectator*, begun in 1750, and published every Tuesday and Saturday until his wife's death in 1752, established his name as an essayist. But the work which finally crowned his success, broke down the barriers of wealth and prejudice, and made him the foremost man of letters of his day, was the famous "Dictionary of the English Language." Johnson, issuing the prospectus of this work in 1747, addressed it, after the manner of the day, to Lord Chesterfield, at that time the most distinguished nobleman in England. The earl sent a small sum of money, and then for seven years forgot Johnson's very existence. When, however, the Dictionary, an assured success, was on the point of appearing, Lord Chesterfield, as Johnson said, "fell a-scribbling in the *World* about it." Then Johnson took his revenge. He wrote the noble lord that famous letter into which he packed the gathered scorn of all those years of suffering and disappointment: —

"My Lord, — I have been lately informed by the proprietor of the *World* that two papers in which my Dictionary is recommended to the public, were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honor which, being very little accustomed to favors from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

"When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address; and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre* — that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in

public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed, since I waited in your outward rooms or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

"The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my Lord,

"Your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

It is not hard to imagine the effect of such a letter upon the man who received it. As a recent biographer of Johnson has said, it was "one of those knock-down blows to which no answer is possible, and upon which comment is superfluous."

Johnson was now become a great name in the world of letters. Some years before, Smollet had characterized him as "the Great Cham of literature," by which was meant that he delivered his opinions with the air, and something of the authority, of an absolute monarch. After the appearance of his great work, he was commonly known as "Dictionary Johnson." Acquaintance with him was sought by men of eminence. The University of Oxford granted him the degree of Master of Arts in time for him to insert the letters M.A. after his name on the title-page of the Dictionary. But fame did not at once bring prosperity. At one time he was arrested for a small debt, and but for the timely assistance of his distinguished friend, Joshua Reynolds the painter, would have been taken to a debtor's prison. He still dressed in shabby clothes, lived in a garret, and wrote sitting in a broken-legged chair, which was kept from falling only by being drawn against the wall. Such were his worldly circumstances when word came to him, in January, 1759, that his aged mother, in the old home at Lichfield, was lying at the point of death. Johnson had little money at hand, nor any means, save his pen, of raising more. He at once set himelf doggedly to the task of writing a book. A letter from Johnson to Mr. Strahan, the printer, is still in existence, in which, referring to a conversation of the night before, Johnson says that the title of the book will be, "The Choice of Life, or, The History of . . . Prince of Abyssinia." He begs Mr. Strahan to procure for him at least thirty pounds on the delivery of the manuscript. Three days later, when the work, which had occupied the evenings of a single week, was in the hands of the printer, Johnson learned that his

mother's life was at an end. The money he received for the first edition of the work went to pay the expenses of her funeral and such small debts as she had left.

The "Prince of Abyssinia," was immediately successful. It passed through eight editions during Johnson's life and was translated into almost every modern language. After the sixth edition, the name was changed to "Rasselas." Three years later, in 1762, came the turning point in Johnson's fortunes. He received from the king a pension of £300, which placed him fairly beyond the reach of want. In the next year he met the young Scotchman, James Boswell, who was destined to enrich English literature with the most famous of all biographies. Two other acquaintances whose names are always associated with that of Johnson, were the rich brewer Thrale and his wife (afterwards Mrs. Piozzi) at whose home Johnson was for many years an honored guest. But one more important work of Johnson's remains to be mentioned, the "Lives of the Poets," a series of critical biographies prefixed to an edition of the principal English poets after Cowley. Johnson died on the 13th of December, 1784, at his house in Fleet street. His tomb is in Westminster Abbey among the famous dead of whom in the time of his great poverty and depression he had once quoted, to Goldsmith, the line from Ovid:

"Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis."

In many ways Johnson's character is anything but admirable. Arbitrary, domineering, irritable, he puffs and storms his way through the pages of Boswell's "Life" like some wild beast turned loose in society. We see him insolent and overbearing in conversation, sputtering absurd prejudices and foolish superstitions, openly fearful of death and the hereafter as a child is of the dark, in terror much of the time lest he go insane, morbidly sad, habitually indolent, a personage one would think

little worthy of being handed down to posterity as a great figure in the list of noted Englishmen. This, however, is but one side, the worst, of Johnson's character. If he was arbitrary and dogmatic in the assertion of his opinions, he at any rate had opinions more worth hearing than almost any other man of his time. If his mind was filled with prejudices, he was at least prejudiced on the side of high thinking and right conduct. When compelled to break through his natural indolence, he brought to the labor of composition an intense concentration of mind, a range of exact information that were the envy of the most patiently industrious students of his day. The peculiarities of his temper, his 'anfractuosities,' to use Macaulay's word, we may pardon on the score of his bodily infirmities and the bitter experiences of his early life. His superstitions might, perhaps, be paralleled, if the truth were known, from the biographies of famous men now living. But Johnson possessed other traits of character in the light of which his unfortunate 'anfractuosities' become not only pardonable but, to those who have learned to know him thoroughly, fairly lovable. Beneath all his awkward roughness of manner was concealed the tenderest of hearts. Even in his most abject poverty he gave, with reckless improvidence, to others poorer than himself. He has told that he always carried pennies in his pockets which he was accustomed to slip into the hands of unfortunates whom he found sleeping in the streets, in order that they might have wherewith to buy a breakfast. In his later years he filled his house with a motley collection of poor creatures dependent upon his bounty: a negro, a blind friend of his wife's, a destitute surgeon. To the support of these and of other cases of charity Johnson devoted the greater part of his pension. He possessed moral courage in a high degree. At a time when he might have become wealthy by laying aside his political principles and writing in favor of measures in which he did not

believe, he steadfastly rejected all offers of bribes, preferring to live in poverty rather than to sacrifice cleanness of conscience. He was rigid in his adherence to the truth. He would not, it is said, even allow his servant to employ the polite commonplace "not at home," lest some visitor should be deceived. Though, like his friend Bathurst, "a good hater," Johnson loved and admired his friends with extraordinary warmth and intensity. His list of intimate acquaintances is longer and embraces more famous men than that of almost any other English man of letters. We may see in this combination of attractive and unattractive qualities the secret of the interest Johnson has always excited among those who have made themselves familiar with his life and personality. We like to know that great men are not, after all, so very different from ourselves; and Johnson, though, in many senses, a great man, was thoroughly human. Few men can plead to more weaknesses of the flesh than could Johnson. He had failings such as fall to the lot of the humblest of mankind. His merit is, not that he had such weaknesses, but that through a long life of misfortune, hardship and disease, he daily fought with them, and daily overcame.

METHODS OF STUDY.

In the case of our best-known authors and their most celebrated works, so abundant is the material, so numerous the problems which the student might solve if he had the time to attack them, that the field for research is practically inexhaustible. Questions of history, of philology, of criticism, of literary influence, arise in countless numbers as soon as we take in hand the task of knowing all that there is to be known about any English masterpiece.

No single method of study, therefore, that might be proposed would be likely to meet the requirements of all teachers or of all students, even were it desirable, as it certainly is not, that all should follow out precisely the same programme. The following general outline is intended to indicate the main lines of work which may be pursued with profit, and which, if carried out with thoroughness, when thoroughness is possible, will lead to a systematic and exhaustive consideration of any piece of literature. By combining and modifying these suggestions the teacher may work out a method of study to suit his own peculiar needs. Any method must be accounted good, which, in practical operation, brings the student to a fairly comprehensive knowledge, and consequently to a fairly well-grounded appreciation, of any one of our modern English classics.

(*a*) *Preliminary Reading.* — While the study of literature

means, of course, something more than mere passive reading of the work or works in hand, such reading should, in the nature of things, come first in the order of education. With the introduction of the study of English literature into our High Schools, has arisen in many quarters the complaint that boys and girls do not peruse the nicely annotated editions of our modern classics with the avidity that marked the hasty, uncritical reading of an older generation. It is reported, on what is believed to be good authority, that students have been heard to say they 'hated' the "Ancient Mariner" and the "Lady of the Lake" and the "Vicar of Wakefield" and even — though it seems incredible — "Guy Mannering" and "Ivanhoe." They 'hated' these noble specimens of English poetry and prose because they were doled out in daily lessons with notes to be learned and recited upon. It is even said, though good evidence cannot be offered on this point, that some scholars have been in the habit, when hard pressed for time, of reading up the notes and neglecting altogether the study of the text. Without entering upon a discussion with regard to the usefulness of annotated editions, it may be said in general that to deprive a boy or girl of the first eager, ravenous mastication of such works as "Ivanhoe" and the "Vicar of Wakefield" is little less than cruelty to children. There is a flavor about the first taste of good literature, which, once missed, can never again be experienced. If the student is interested in the work upon first taking it up, he should be allowed to read it through as rapidly as his interest in the story or his hunger for the music of the verse may drive him. If he can read the whole book through, omitting nothing, and still preserve his interest, it is well that he be encouraged to do so. If he cannot without loss of intentness and concentration read the work as a whole, then let him, in this his first contact with the raw material of culture, read just what he will, even though he "skip" ruth-

lessly pages of the rarest and profoundest moral disquisition.

The question will be asked at this point, Would not the reading be more profitable if it could be pursued with critical attention and thorough understanding? Doubtless; but that is an art which must be learned by slow degrees. The student's eyes must be opened to the value and significance of the neglected passages. Gradually, with the increasing knowledge which he should derive from the class-room drill, a larger and larger proportion of each book will grow to have an interest for him. In some schools the commendable practice has been followed, of placing on an easily accessible shelf in the class-room a collection of the best English prose and poetry. The pupils are invited, as they have time, to read whatever each may find suited to his taste. Some will read Cooper, some Macaulay, some Sir Walter Scott.

(*b*) *Historical Study.* — This includes every manner of inquiry into the life history of the author and especially into the circumstances attending the production of the work to be studied. The extent of the inquiry and the nature of the sources from which the facts are drawn must depend upon the amount of time to be devoted to the subject and the literary facilities at command. In the case of some schools, unfortunately, a single brief sketch will be all that the programme of study will allow, but whenever possible the pupil should be encouraged to consult more than one authority, to institute comparisons, and to pursue his reading into related subjects as far as interest and curiosity will lead him. The writings of most English writers have been greatly influenced by the political, religious, and literary currents of the times in which they lived; the authors have in turn exercised more or less influence upon such currents. It follows that if we would understand the author's life to the full, we must read it in the light

of contemporary history. For the same reason, when studying any particular work, we may inquire concerning it whether it has been affected in form or contents by the circumstances under which it was produced, whether its style has been influenced by that of some preceding or contemporary writer, whether it exhibits opinions and views of life peculiar to the author at a given time, and so on. Sometimes, reversing the process, it is profitable study to seek in the book itself for information regarding the author's life, mind, and character. What characteristics of Dr. Johnson's mind, for example, may we infer from his "Rasselas"? In such study it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the author's open expression of his own convictions and his attribution of opinions he may or may not hold, to characters he has created. Whatever may be the method of historical research, the results will be better understood and longer retained if the plan is adopted of assigning each student a special topic for investigation. A student who is required to commit to memory the dates of George Eliot's works will remember them for perhaps one or two recitations; but if some definite question be assigned him, as, for example, How much time did the author devote to the composition of each one of her novels? and he is encouraged to hunt the answer to this question through half a dozen books and essays, he will not only fix the dates in mind so that he probably never will forget them, but also will pick up, incidentally, no inconsiderable fund of biographical information.

The question whether the study of the author's life should come before or after the reading of his work, can only be determined by the circumstances of particular cases. A good biography is a great stimulus to interest in the works of an author, but the reading of exhaustive criticisms and analyses, such as are to be found in most biographies, almost invariably

results in forestalling the student's own impressions and generally in blunting to some degree the sharp edge of his interest. The danger may be averted by the plan just suggested of assigning a particular topic to each member of the class.

(*c*) *Interpretative Study* — Under this head may be included all investigations into the form and contents of the work that aim not at determining its literary value but simply at describing it. Such are [a] inquiries into the literary species, i.e., as to whether the work is an essay, a novel, a drama, or some other recognized form; [b] into the substance of the ideas, the trend of the plot, etc., leading to an analysis; [c] into the meaning of obscure allusions, rare or obsolete words, unfamiliar idioms, etc. It has come to be the custom for the editor to save the student the trouble of seeking the information included under this last head, by furnishing it to him gratis in notes at the bottom of the page or at the end of the volume. Doubtless the ideal plan is for the student to look up all such matters for himself in the dictionary, encyclopædia, and other books of reference. The notes should be reserved for information that is not readily accessible.

(*d*) *Critical Study.* — By this is meant the application of standards of criticism in order to decide whether the work, or any given portion of it, is, from the literary point of view, good or bad. The earliest critical judgments of the pupil are purely subjective impressions. He likes the work, or he does not like it. If asked why he exhibits a preference one way or the other, it is usual that he offers a trivial and inadequate explanation of the effect, or else falls back upon the bare fact of preference as in itself sufficient. If the inadequate reason, as far as it goes, is sound, the feeling just, the pupil is already started on the right path. The latent critical sense is there; the teacher has but to develop it by encouraging a search for the rational element underlying the impulsive

choice. If the pupil offers a single good reason for his liking of a passage or a character, it is easy to show him that other related causes enter into his appreciation. In this way the critical analysis may be pushed as far as the student's powers will warrant. The only too common method of compelling pupils to commit to memory certain rules and formulæ to be applied irrespective of the pupil's feeling for the value of the literature, produces most unfortunate results. Students are often led to pretend to a liking they do not really have, simply to avoid the charge of stupidity. Tested by the rules, the work should be excellent; tested by the pupil's own feelings, it is insufferably tiresome. Undoubtedly the pupil is in the wrong, but in a matter that depends after all so largely upon culture and emotional temperament, argument is of little or no effect. If outwardly compliant, yet, convinced against his will, the student remains, in fact, intrenched in the inner fortress of his own conviction. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that the very learning of a principle of criticism will often open the pupil's eyes to literary qualities the existence of which he had not before suspected. The feelings may be trained to wait upon the judgment. The solution of the difficulty, as it seems to the present writer, lies in carrying on the two processes of development side by side. The sense of literary value, where it exists, should be shown to correspond to, to be explained by, the so-called laws of rhetoric; the rhetorical principles should be verified by illustrations drawn from passages for which the student has already shown an instinctive appreciation. Thus the rules become for the student what they are in reality — the statement of certain uniformities in modes of feeling. The sense of value, on the other hand, losing its character of mere prejudice, grounds upon observed principles of order and adjustment, and in time becomes good taste.

Account must be taken of differences of temperament. It would be absurd as well as unscientific to deny that certain natures are irresponsive to literary influences by which others are profoundly affected. Some students enjoy poetry, others cannot endure it. So far, however, from the proverb being true that there is no accounting for tastes, almost every difference observable may be traced to some peculiar exciting cause — to a difference of temperament, education, or surroundings. In some cases the disposition may be to a considerable degree modified by proper training; in others the causes are too deep-seated to be reached by any of the ordinary school methods. The prepossession or the antipathy will last through life.

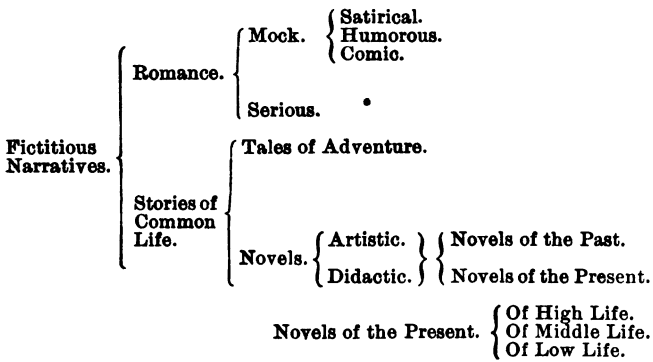
AIDS TO THE STUDY OF RASSELAS.

Historical. — For the facts of Johnson's biography and the characteristics of the man, Boswell's "Life of Johnson" is the one unfailing source. One of the most delightful and interesting of books, whether for young or old, it should early be brought to the attention of all students of English literature. Mr. G. Birkbeck Hill's edition in six volumes, with its profusion of notes and supplementary material, is easily the best. Alexander Napier's "Boswell," to which Robina Napier's "Johnsoniana" is a supplement, ranks next in importance. Both editions are carefully indexed. The Bohn Library edition of Croker's "Boswell," always in print, may be had at a low price. Henry Morley has edited for Routledge & Sons what is known as the "Sir Joshua Reynolds" Boswell, "with steel engravings." The same firm publish a two-shilling edition with a very carelessly edited text. A condensation of the "Life" from the pen of Alexander Main, will be of some value where the original is not to be obtained. Of other works of biography and criticism, Stephen's "Johnson," in the English Men of Letters series, should be mentioned first. Where but one reference book, and that a low-priced one, can be purchased, this should be selected. G. Birkbeck Hill's "Dr. Johnson, His Friends and Critics" is entertainingly written, but is in great part controversial. Mr. Hill is author of "Wit and Wisdom of Samuel Johnson," a series of selections arranged in alphabetical order, with a valuable introduction, and has edited, also with a critical introduction, "Select Essays of Dr. Johnson." The best single essay is Macaulay's article "Johnson," in the Encyclopædia Britannica, republished in Matthew Arnold's "Six Chief

Lives." It will be found in any complete edition of Macaulay's "Essays." In connection with it should be read Macaulay's review of Croker's "Boswell." Carlyle's essay on the same work should not be overlooked. Upon Johnson's relation to his time, nothing is so good as Leslie Stephen's "English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," vol. ii., p. 206–209, 374–376, and other passages referred to in the index at the end of the second volume under "Johnson." Since the point of view in this work is that of the advanced student, the simpler presentation of much the same matter in Stephen's volume in the English Men of Letters series will better suit the needs of the beginner. In marked contrast with Stephen's careful study is the flippant, but none the less readable, chapter in "Taine's History of English Literature" (Van Laun's translation, vol. iii., p. 316–324). A voluminous essay by Arthur Murphy on the "Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson" forms the preface to the Oxford edition of Johnson's "Complete Works," and is reprinted in Robina Napier's "Johnsoniana." Cary, the translator of Dante, included a life of Johnson in his "Lives of the English Poets." Numerous magazine articles, many of them not worth the student's attention, are referred to in Poole's "Index of Periodical Literature." Macaulay's article from the Enclyclopædia Britannica is reprinted in *Harper's Magazine*, vol. xiv., p. 483; his paper on Croker's "Boswell" originally appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, vol. liv., p. 1. Leslie Stephen's article on "The Writings of Johnson," in the *Cornhill Magazine*, vol. xxix., p. 280 (reprinted in "Hours in a Library," 2d Series, p. 198), Edmund Gosse's contribution to the *Fortnightly*, vol. xlii., page 780, and Augustine Birrell's entertaining paper in the *Contemporary*, vol. xlvii., p. 25 (reprinted in *Obiter Dicta*, 2d Series), may all be commended. The essay by W. Cyples on "Johnson without Boswell," in *Contemporary*, vol. xxxii., p. 707, deals almost solely with Johnson's style. Other accounts,

necessarily briefer, will be found in Morley and Tyler's "Manual," Gosse's "History of Eighteenth Century Literature," p. 282–295, and Minto's "Manual of English Prose," p. 413–428. The student especially interested in Johnson's character as shown in his relation to his friends, should be sent to the correspondence of Johnson and Mrs. Thrale, published in "Autobiography, Letters and Literary remains of Mrs. Piozzi" and in Scoones's "Four Centuries of English Letters."

Interpretative. — (a) The determination of the class of compositions to which Rasselas belongs is apparently a very easy task, yet if properly considered it involves questions concerning the province and classification of English prose fiction, that may be made profitable subject for research and discussion. On p. 457–8 of Thomas Arnold's "Manual of English Literature" (American edition) will be found an analysis perhaps as simple and practical as any that can be recommended. It is exhibited in the following diagram:



The student should place "Rasselas" in its proper classification, and find other compositions of the same general character to compare with it.

(b) The outlining of the plot, sketching of characters, abstracting of arguments and the like, are useful exercises both for fixing the substance of the work in mind and for testing the pupil's knowledge. If they are to be of real service toward either of these ends the outline must be constructed according to some definite plan. On abstract-writing in general a little work by John Hunter, "An Introduction to the Writing of Precis or Digests," with Key (2 vols. Lond: 1872), contains useful hints. Briefer but more to the point are the excellent paragraphs on "Interpretation" in Genung's "Practical Elements of Rhetoric," p. 301–315. "Rasselas" presents excellent material for work of this kind, the simplicity of its plot especially adapting it to the needs of beginners.

(c) "Webster's International Dictionary" should be at hand for looking up unfamiliar words. Its appendices are of especial value, and will, in some cases, take the place of an encyclopædia. Where it can be afforded the new "Century Dictionary" will be a welcome addition to the interpretative apparatus. Daily contact with this work will in itself constitute the beginnings of a liberal education. The meanings of the few obscure allusions to be found in "Rasselas" may be sought for in such works as "Brewer's Reader's Handbook," or the same author's "Dictionary of Phrase and Fable," though Wheeler's "Vocabulary of Noted Names of Fiction, etc.," appended to Webster's "International Dictionary" is little less inclusive. (See, however, in Wheeler's "Vocabulary" the curious omission under "Father of Waters.") As few high school libraries are now without gazetteers, biographical dictionaries, and sets of good encyclopædias, it is unnecessary to dwell upon the value of such aids.

Critical. — The value of this line of work, however elementary it may be, will depend largely upon the ability of the instructor to call out and intrepret the sincere opinions of his pupils.

This ability can never be acquired by a slavish adherence to the dogmas of a rhetorical text-book. It can come only through wide reading in the masterpieces of English literature, joined to a thorough-going acquaintance with the fundamental principles of criticism. As the literature of criticism is now so extensive that the subject forms a distinct science by itself, the selection of references is by no means an easy task. Such works as Kames's "Elements of Criticism," Blair's "Lectures on Rhetoric," and Alison's "Essays on the Nature and Principles of Taste," once accepted as infallible authorities, have now only an historical interest. No systematic treatise has, in modern times, arisen to succeed them. The following works may be recommended as helpful: Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature" (especially p. 31–180 and 417–428 in the American edition); Lewes's "Principles of Success in Literature,"[1] De Quincey's "Essay on Style;" Newman's lecture on "Literature" (in his "Idea of a University"), and Spencer's "Philosophy of Style."

Criticisms of Johnson's Style will be found in Minto's "Manual," p. 417–428; Stephen's "Johnson," chap. vi., and the article by W. Cyples in the *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxxii., p. 707. (See Appendix C.)

Certain peculiarities of Johnsonian prose at once obtrude themselves upon the reader; they are unmistakable; yet the total effect is due to a complexity of causes. The student of "Rasselas" will find it profitable to collect specimens illustrative of the following peculiarities:

1. Wordiness and tautology.

2. Fondness for big words, that is, words of Latin derivation. "You fall into the common errors of exaggeratory decla-

[1] George Henry Lewes. The Principles of Success in Literature. Edited with Introduction and Notes by Fred N. Scott, Ph.D. Boston: 1891.

mation, by producing, in a familiar disquisition, examples of national calamities, etc." (chap. xxviii.).

3. Use of abstract for concrete. "To fill up the vacancies of attention and lessen the tediousness of time" (chap. i.). "We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments" (chap. xii).

4. Ponderous movement in the rhythm of the sentence.

5. Monotonous employment of the same rhythmical movement.

6. Awkward inversions. "Their pleasures were gross and sensual-in which the mind had no part" (chap. xvi.).

7. A liking for antithesis and a consequent preference for balanced sentences.

8. Fondness for obverse statement and contrast.

Note also Johnson's avoidance of parenthesis and sparing use of figures.

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE.

1709. Sept. 18, Johnson born at Lichfield.
1728. Goes to Oxford.
1735. Translates Lobo's *Abyssinia*. Marries.
1737. Goes to London with Garrick.
1738. Publishes *London*.
1739. Publishes two political pamphlets: *The Complete Vindication and Marmor Norfolciense*.
1740–3. Writes Debates in Magna Lilliputia for *Gentleman's Magazine*.
1744. *Life of Mr. Richard Savage*.
1745. *Miscellaneous Observations on Macbeth*.
1747. *Plan for a Dictionary of the English Language*.
1748. Writes *Vanity of Human Wishes*.
1749. *Vanity of Human Wishes* published. *Irene* (written 1736) acted.
1750–2. *The Rambler*.
1752. His wife dies.
1752–3. Contributes to Hawkesworth's *Adventurer*.
1755. Publishes *The Dictionary*.
1756. Issues *Proposals for an Edition of Shakespeare*.
1758–60. Writes *The Idler* for the *Universal Chronicle*.
1759. His mother dies. Publishes *The Prince of Abyssinia*.
1762. Granted a pension.
1763. Meets Boswell.
1764. The Literary club is founded. Johnson meets the Thrales.
1765. *Edition of Shakespeare*.
1770. *The False Alarm*.
1771. *Thoughts on the Late Transactions respecting the Falkland Islands*.

1773. Tour to Scotland and the Hebrides.
1774. *The Patriot.* Tour to North Wales.
1775. *Taxation no Tyranny. Journey to the Western Islands.*
1776. *Political Tracts.*
1777. Begins *Lives of Poets.*
1779. Publishes four volumes of *Lives.*
1781. Last six volumes of *Lives.* Thrale dies.
1784. Mrs. Thrale becomes Mrs. Piozzi. Dec. 13 Johnson dies.
1785. Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations* published. Boswell publishes *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides.*
1788–9. Johnson's *Sermons.*
1791. Boswell's *Life of Johnson.*
1816. Johnson's *Diary in North Wales.*

THE

HISTORY OF RASSELAS,

PRINCE OF ABYSSINIA.

CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF A PALACE IN A VALLEY.

Ye who listen with credulity to the whispers of fancy, and pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope, who expect that age will perform the promises of youth, and that the deficiencies of the present day will be supplied by the morrow, attend to the history of Rasselas,[3] prince of Abyssinia.

Rasselas was the fourth son of the mighty emperor in whose dominions the Father of Waters[2] begins his course;[4] whose bounty pours down the streams of plenty, and scatters over half the world the harvests of Egypt.[5]

According to the custom which has descended from age to age among the monarchs of the torrid zone, Rasselas was confined in a private palace, with the other sons and daughters of Abyssinian royalty, till the order of succession should call him to the throne.

NOTE. — The figures in the text refer to the notes, pp. 201-207.

The place which the wisdom or policy of antiquity had destined for the residence of the Abyssinian princes, was a spacious valley[8] in the kingdom of Amhara, surrounded on every side by mountains, of which the summits overhang the middle part. The only passage by which it could be entered, was a cavern that passed under a rock, of which it has long been disputed whether it was the work of nature or of human industry. The outlet of the cavern was concealed by a thick wood, and the mouth which opened into the valley was closed with gates of iron, forged by the artificers of ancient days, so massy that no man could without the help of engines[1] open or shut them.

From the mountains on every side, rivulets descended, that filled all the valley with verdure and fertility, and formed a lake in the middle, inhabited by fish of every species, and frequented by every fowl whom nature has taught to dip the wing in water. This lake discharged its superfluities by a stream, which entered a dark cleft of the mountain on the northern side, and fell with dreadful noise from precipice to precipice till it was heard no more.

The sides of the mountains were covered with trees; the banks of the brooks were diversified with flowers; every blast shook spices from the rocks, and every month dropped fruits upon the ground. All animals that bite the grass, or browse the shrub, whether wild or tame, wandered in this extensive circuit, secured from beasts of prey by the mountains which confined them. On one part were flocks and herds feeding in the pastures, on

another all the beasts of chase frisking in the lawns; the sprightly kid was bounding on the rocks, the subtle[1] monkey frolicking in the trees, and the solemn elephant reposing in the shade. All the diversities of the world were brought together; the blessings of nature were collected, and its evils extracted and excluded.[2]

The valley, wide and fruitful, supplied its inhabitants with the necessaries of life, and all delights and superfluities were added at the annual visit which the emperor paid his children, when the iron gate was opened to the sound of music, and, during eight days, every one that resided in the valley was required to propose whatever might contribute to make seclusion pleasant, to fill up the vacancies of attention, and lessen the tediousness of time. Every desire was immediately granted. All the artificers of pleasure were called to gladden the festivity; the musicians exerted the power of harmony, and the dancers showed their activity before the princes, in hope that they should pass their lives in this blissful captivity, to which those only were admitted whose performance was thought able to add novelty to luxury. Such was the appearance of security and delight which this retirement afforded, that they to whom it was new always desired that it might be perpetual; and as those on whom the iron gate had once closed were never suffered to return, the effect of longer experience could not be known. Thus every year produced new schemes of delight, and new competitors for imprisonment.

The palace stood on an eminence, raised about thirty paces above the surface of the lake. It was divided into

many squares or courts, built with greater or less magnificence, according to the rank of those for whom they were designed. The roofs were turned into arches of massy stone, joined by a cement that grew harder by time; and the building stood from century to century, deriding the solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes,[5] without need of reparation[1].

This house, which was so large as to be fully known to none but some ancient officers who successively inherited the secrets of the place, was built as if suspicion herself had dictated the plan. To every room there was an open and secret passage; every square had a communication with the rest, either from the upper stories by private galleries, or by subterranean passages from the lower apartments. Many of the columns had unsuspected cavities in which a long race of monarchs had deposited their treasures. They then closed up the opening with marble, which was never to be removed but in the utmost exigencies of the kingdom, and recorded their accumulations in a book, which was itself concealed in a tower, not entered but by the emperor, attended by the prince who stood next in succession.

CHAPTER II.

THE DISCONTENT OF RASSELAS IN THE HAPPY VALLEY.

HERE the sons and daughters of Abyssinia lived only to know the soft vicissitudes of pleasure and repose, attended by all that were skilful to delight, and gratified with whatever the senses can enjoy. They wandered in gardens of fragrance, and slept in the fortresses of security. Every art was practised to make them pleased with their own condition. The sages who instructed them, told them of nothing but the miseries of public life, and described all beyond the mountains as regions of calamity, where discord was always raging, and where man preyed upon man. To heighten their opinion of their own felicity, they were daily entertained with songs, the subject of which was *the happy valley.* Their appetites were excited by frequent enumerations of different enjoyments; and revelry and merriment was the business of every hour, from the dawn of morning to the close of even.

These methods were generally successful: few of the princes had ever wished to enlarge their bounds, but passed their lives in full conviction that they had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow, and pitied those whom fate had excluded from this seat of

tranquillity, as the sport of chance and the slaves of misery.

Thus they rose in the morning and lay down at night, pleased with each other and with themselves, — all but Rasselas, who, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, began to withdraw himself from their pastimes and assemblies, and to delight in solitary walks and silent meditation. He often sat before tables covered with luxury, and forgot to taste the dainties that were placed before him; he rose abruptly in the midst of the song, and hastily retired beyond the sound of music. His attendants observed the change, and endeavored to renew his love of pleasure; he neglected their officiousness, repulsed their invitations, and spent day after day on the banks of rivulets sheltered with trees, where he sometimes listened to the birds in the branches, sometimes observed the fish playing in the stream, and anon cast his eyes upon the pastures and mountains filled with animals, of which some were biting the herbage, and some sleeping among the bushes.

This singularity of his humor[1] made him much observed. One of the sages, in whose conversation he had formerly delighted, followed him secretly, in hope of discovering the cause of his disquiet. Rasselas, who knew not that any one was near him, having for some time fixed his eyes upon the goats that were browsing among the rocks, began to compare their condition with his own.

"What," said he, "makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation? Every beast

that strays beside me has the same corporeal necessities with myself: he is hungry and crops the grass, he is thirsty and drinks the stream; his thirst and hunger are appeased, he is satisfied and sleeps; he arises again and is hungry; he is again fed and is at rest. I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am like him pained with want, but am not like him satisfied with fulness. The intermediate hours are tedious and gloomy; I long again to be hungry, that I may again quicken my attention. The birds peck the berries or the corn, and fly away to the groves, where they sit in seeming happiness on the branches, and waste their lives in tuning one unvaried series of sounds. I likewise can call the lutanist and the singer; but the sounds that pleased me yesterday weary me to-day, and will grow yet more wearisome to-morrow. I can discover within me no power of perception which is not glutted with its proper[1] pleasure; yet I do not feel myself delighted. Man surely has some latent sense for which this place affords no gratification; or he has some desires distinct from sense, which must be satisfied before he can be happy."

After this he lifted up his head, and seeing the moon rising, walked towards the palace. As he passed through the fields, and saw the animals around him, "Ye," said he, "are happy, and need not envy me that walk thus among you, burdened with myself; nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity, for it is not the felicity of man. I have many distresses from which ye are free; I fear pain when I do not feel it; I sometimes shrink at

evils recollected, and sometimes start at evils anticipated: surely the equity of Providence has balanced peculiar sufferings with peculiar enjoyments."

With observations like these the prince amused himself as he returned, uttering them with a plaintive voice, yet with a look that discovered[1] him to feel some complacence in his own perspicacity, and to receive some solace of the miseries of life, from consciousness of the delicacy with which he felt, and the eloquence with which he bewailed them. He mingled cheerfully in the diversions of the evening, and all rejoiced to find that his heart was lightened.

CHAPTER III.

THE WANTS OF HIM THAT WANTS NOTHING.

On the next day, his old instructor, imagining that he had now made himself acquainted with his disease of mind, was in hope of curing it by counsel, and officiously sought an opportunity of conference, which the prince, having long considered him as one whose intellects[1] were exhausted, was not very willing to afford: "Why," said he, "does this man thus intrude upon me; shall I be never suffered to forget those lectures which pleased only while they were new, and to become new again must be forgotten?" He then walked into the wood, and composed himself to his usual meditations; when, before his thoughts had taken any settled form, he perceived his pursuer at his side, and was at first prompted by his impatience to go hastily away; but, being unwilling to offend a man whom he had once reverenced and still loved, he invited him to sit down with him on the bank.

The old man, thus encouraged, began to lament the change which had been lately observed in the prince, and to inquire why he so often retired from the pleasures of the palace to loneliness and silence. "I fly from pleasure," said the prince, "because pleasure has ceased

to please: I am lonely,[1] because I am miserable, and am unwilling to cloud with my presence the happiness of others." "You, sir," said the sage, "are the first who has complained of misery in the happy valley. I hope to convince you that your complaints have no real cause. You are here in full possession of all that the emperor of Abyssinia can bestow; here is neither labor to be endured nor danger to be dreaded, yet here is all that labor or danger can procure or purchase. Look round and tell me which of your wants is without supply: if you want nothing, how are you unhappy?"

"That I want nothing," said the prince, "or that I know not what I want, is the cause of my complaint; if I had any known want, I should have a certain wish; that wish would excite endeavor, and I should not then repine to see the sun move so slowly towards the western mountain, or lament when the day breaks and sleep will no longer hide me from myself. When I see the kids and the lambs chasing one another, I fancy that I should be happy if I had something to pursue. But possessing all that I can want, I find one day and one hour exactly like another, except that the latter is still more tedious than the former. Let your experience inform me how the day may now seem as short as in my childhood, while nature was yet fresh, and every moment showed me what I never had observed before. I have already enjoyed too much: give me something to desire."

The old man was surprised at this new species of affliction, and knew not what to reply, yet was unwilling to be silent. "Sir," said he, "if you had seen the mis-

eries of the world, you would know how to value your present state." "Now," said the prince, "you have given me something to desire; I shall long to see the miseries of the world, since the sight of them is necessary to happiness."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCE CONTINUES TO GRIEVE AND MUSE.

At this time the sound of music proclaimed the hour of repast, and the conversation was concluded. The old man went away sufficiently discontented, to find that his reasonings had produced the only conclusion which they were intended to prevent. But in the decline of life shame and grief are of short duration: whether it be that we bear easily what we have borne long; or that, finding ourselves in age less regarded, we less regard others; or, that we look with slight regard upon afflictions to which we know that the hand of death is about to put an end.

The prince, whose views were extended to a wider space, could not speedily quiet his emotions. He had been before terrified at the length of life which nature promised him, because he considered that in a long time much must be endured; he now rejoiced in his youth, because in many years much might be done.

This first beam of hope that had been ever darted into his mind, rekindled youth in his cheeks, and doubled the lustre of his eyes. He was fired with the desire of doing something, though he knew not yet with distinctness either end or means.

He was now no longer gloomy and unsocial; but considering himself as master of a secret stock of happiness, which he could enjoy only by concealing it, he affected to be busy in all schemes of diversion, and endeavored to make others pleased with the state of which he himself was weary. But pleasures never can be so multiplied or continued, as not to leave much of life unemployed; there were many hours, both of the night and day, which he could spend without suspicion in solitary thought. The load of life was much lightened: he went eagerly into the assemblies, because he supposed the frequency of his presence necessary to the success of his purposes; he retired gladly to privacy, because he had now a subject of thought.

His chief amusement was to picture to himself that world which he had never seen; to place himself in various conditions, to be entangled in imaginary difficulties, and to be engaged in wild adventures; but his benevolence always terminated his projects in the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.

Thus passed twenty months of the life of Rasselas. He busied himself so intensely in visionary bustle that he forgot his real solitude; and amidst hourly preparations for the various incidents of human affairs, neglected to consider by what means he should mingle with mankind.

One day, as he was sitting on a bank, he feigned to himself an orphan virgin robbed of her little portion by a treacherous lover, and crying after him for restitution

and redress. So strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid's defence, and ran forward to seize the plunderer, with all the eagerness of real pursuit. Fear naturally quickens the flight of guilt. Rasselas could not catch the fugitive with his utmost efforts; but resolving to weary by perseverance, him whom he could not surpass in speed, he pressed on till the foot of the mountain stopped his course.

Here he recollected himself, and smiled at his own useless impetuosity. Then raising his eyes to the mountain, "This," said he, "is the fatal obstacle that hinders at once the enjoyment of pleasure and the exercise of virtue. How long is it that my hopes and wishes have flown beyond this boundary of my life, which yet I never have attempted to surmount!"

Struck with this reflection, he sat down to muse; and remembered, that since he first resolved to escape from his confinement, the sun had passed twice over him in his annual course. He now felt a degree of regret with with which he had never been before acquainted. He considered how much might have been done, in the time which had passed and left nothing real behind it. He compared twenty months with the life of man. "In life," said he, "is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or imbecility of age. We are long[1] before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of human existence may be reasonably estimated at forty years, of which I have mused away the four and twentieth part. What I have

lost was certain, for I have certainly possessed it; but of twenty months to come who can assure me?"

The consciousness of his own folly pierced him deeply, and he was long before he could be reconciled to himself. "The rest of my time," said he, "has been lost by the crime or folly of my ancestors, and the absurd institutions of my country; I remember it with disgust, yet without remorse: but the months that have passed since new light darted into my soul, since I formed a scheme of reasonable felicity, have been squandered by my own fault. I have lost that which can never be restored; I have seen the sun rise and set for twenty months, an idle gazer on the light of heaven; in this time the birds have left the nest of their mother, and committed themselves to the woods and to the skies; the kid has forsaken the teat, and learned by degrees to climb the rocks in quest of independent sustenance. I only have made no advances, but am still helpless and ignorant. The moon, by more than twenty changes, admonished me of the flux of life; the stream that rolled before my feet upbraided my inactivity. I sat feasting on intellectual luxury, regardless alike of the examples of the earth, and the instructions of the planets. Twenty months are passed: who shall restore them?"

These sorrowful meditations fastened upon his mind; he passed four months in resolving to lose no more time in idle resolves, and was awakened to more vigorous exertion by hearing a maid, who had broken a porcelain cup, remark, that what cannot be repaired is not to be regretted.

This was obvious; and Rasselas reproached himself that he had not discovered it; having not known, or not considered, how many useful hints are obtained by chance, and how often the mind, hurried by her own ardor to distant views, neglects the truths that lie open before her. He for a few hours regretted his regret, and from that time bent his whole mind upon the means of escaping from the valley of happiness.

CHAPTER V.

THE PRINCE MEDITATES HIS ESCAPE.

He now found that it would be very difficult to effect that which it was very easy to suppose effected. When he looked round about him, he saw himself confined by the bars of nature, which had never yet been broken, and by the gate, through which none that once had passed it were ever able to return. He was now impatient as an eagle in a grate.[1] He passed week after week in clambering the mountains, to see if there was any aperture which the bushes might conceal, but found all the summits inaccessible by their prominence. The iron gate he despaired to open, for it was not only secured with all the power of art, but was always watched by successive sentinels, and was by its position exposed to the perpetual observation of all the inhabitants.

He then examined the cavern through which the waters of the lake were discharged; and, looking down at a time when the sun shone strongly upon its mouth, he discovered it to be full of broken rocks, which, though they permitted the stream to flow through many narrow passages, would stop any body of solid bulk. He returned discouraged and dejected; but having now known the blessing of hope, resolved never to despair.

In these fruitless searches he spent ten months. The time, however, passed cheerfully away: in the morning he rose with new hope, in the evening applauded his own diligence, and in the night slept sound after his fatigue. He met a thousand amusements which beguiled his labor, and diversified his thoughts. He discerned the various instincts of animals and properties of plants, and found the place replete with wonders, of which he purposed to solace himself with the contemplation, if he should never be able to accomplish his flight; rejoicing that his endeavors, though yet unsuccessful, had supplied him with a source of inexhaustible inquiry.

But his original curiosity was not yet abated; he resolved to obtain some knowledge of the ways of men. His wish still continued, but his hope grew less. He ceased to survey any longer the walls of his prison, and spared to search by new toils for interstices which he knew could not be found, yet determined to keep his design always in view, and lay hold on any expedient that time should offer.

CHAPTER VI.

A DISSERTATION ON THE ART OF FLYING.

AMONG the artists that had been allured into the happy valley, to labor for the accommodation and pleasure of its inhabitants, was a man eminent for his knowledge of the mechanic powers, who had contrived many engines[1] both of use and recreation. By a wheel which the stream turned, he forced the water into a tower, whence it was distributed to all the apartments of the palace. He erected a pavilion in the garden, around which he kept the air always cool by artificial showers. One of the groves, appropriated to the ladies, was ventilated by fans, to which the rivulets that ran through it gave a constant motion; and instruments of soft music were placed at proper distances, of which some played by the impulse of the wind, and some by the power of the stream.

This artist was sometimes visited by Rasselas, who was pleased with every kind of knowledge, imagining that the time would come when all his acquisitions should be of use to him in the open world. He came one day to amuse himself in his usual manner, and found the master busy in building a sailing chariot:[1] he saw that the design was practicable upon a level sur-

face, and with expressions of great esteem solicited its completion. The workman was pleased to find himself so much regarded by the prince, and resolved to gain yet higher honors. "Sir," said he, "you have seen but a small part of what the mechanic sciences can perform. I have been long of opinion, that instead of the tardy conveyance of ships and chariots, man might use the swifter migration of wings; that the fields of air are open to knowledge, and that only ignorance and idleness need crawl upon the ground."

This hint rekindled the prince's desire of passing the mountains: having seen what the mechanist had already performed, he was willing to fancy that he could do more; yet resolved to inquire further, before he suffered hope to afflict him by disappointment. "I am afraid," said he to the artist, "that your imagination prevails over your skill, and that you now tell me rather what you wish, than what you know. Every animal has his element assigned him; the birds have the air, and man and beasts the earth." "So," replied the mechanist, "fishes have the water, in which yet beasts can swim by nature and men by art. He that can swim needs not despair to fly; to swim is to fly in a grosser fluid, and to fly is to swim in a subtler. We are only to proportion our power of resistance to the different density of matter through which we are to pass. You will be necessarily upborne by the air, if you can renew any impulse upon it faster than the air can recede from the pressure."

"But the exercise of swimming," said the prince, "is

very laborious; the strongest limbs are soon wearied: I am afraid the act of flying will be yet more violent; and wings will be of no great use, unless we can fly further than we can swim."

"The labor of rising from the ground," said the artist, "will be great, as we see it in the heavier domestic fowls; but as we mount higher, the earth's attraction, and the body's gravity, will be gradually diminished, till we shall arrive at a region where the man will float in the air without any tendency to fall: no care will then be necessary but to move forwards, which the gentlest impulse will effect. You, sir, whose curiosity is so extensive, will easily conceive with what pleasure a philosopher, furnished with wings, and hovering in the sky, would see the earth, and all its inhabitants, rolling beneath him, and presenting to him successively, by its diurnal motion, all the countries within the same parallel. How must it amuse the pendent spectator to see the moving scene of land and ocean, cities and deserts! To survey with equal security the marts of trade and the fields of battle; mountains infested by barbarians, and fruitful regions gladdened by plenty and lulled by peace! How easily shall we then trace the Nile through all his passage;[4] pass over to distant regions, and examine the face of nature from one extremity of the earth to the other!"

"All this," said the prince, "is much to be desired; but I am afraid that no man will be able to breathe in these regions of speculation and tranquillity. I have been told that respiration is difficult upon lofty moun-

tains; yet from these precipices, though so high as to produce great tenuity of air, it is very easy to fall; therefore I suspect that from any height where life can be supported, there may be danger of too quick descent."

"Nothing," replied the artist, "will ever be attempted, if all possible objections must be first overcome. If you will favor my project, I will try the first flight at my own hazard. I have considered the structure of all volant[1] animals, and find the folding continuity of the bat's wings most easily accommodated to the human form. Upon this model I shall begin my task to-morrow, and in a year expect to tower into the air beyond the malice and pursuit of man. But I will work only on this condition, that the art shall not be divulged, and that you shall not require me to make wings for any but ourselves."

"Why," said Rasselas, "should you envy others so great an advantage? All skill ought to be exerted for universal good; every man has owed much to others and ought to repay the kindness that he has received."

"If men were all virtuous," returned the artist, "I should with great alacrity teach them all to fly. But what would be the security of the good, if the bad could at pleasure invade them from the sky? Against an army sailing through the clouds, neither walls, nor mountains, nor seas, could afford any security. A flight of northern savages might hover in the wind, and light at once with irresistible violence upon the capital of a fruitful region that was rolling under them. Even this valley, the retreat of princes, the abode of happiness, might

be violated by the sudden descent of some of the naked nations that swarm on the coast of the southern sea."

The prince promised secrecy, and waited for the performance, not wholly hopeless of success. He visited the work from time to time, observed its progress, and remarked many ingenious contrivances to facilitate motion, and unite levity[1] with strength. The artist was every day more certain that he should leave vultures and eagles behind him, and the contagion[1] of his confidence seized upon the prince.

In a year the wings were finished; and, on a morning appointed, the maker appeared furnished for flight on a little promontory; he waved his pinions a while to gather air, then leaped from his stand, and in an instant dropped into the lake. His wings, which were of no use in the air, sustained him in the water, and the prince drew him to land, half dead with terror and vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A MAN OF LEARNING.

THE prince was not much afflicted by this disaster, having suffered himself to hope for a happier event, only because he had no other means of escape in view. He still persisted in his design to leave the happy valley by the first opportunity.

His imagination was now at a stand; he had no prospect of entering into the world; and, notwithstanding all his endeavors to support himself, discontent by degrees preyed upon him, and he began again to lose his thoughts in sadness, when the rainy season, which in these countries is periodical, made it inconvenient to wander in the woods.

The rain continued longer and with more violence than had been ever known; the clouds broke on the surrounding mountains, and the torrents streamed into the plain on every side, till the cavern was too narrow to discharge the water. The lake overflowed its banks, and all the level of the valley was covered with the inundation. The eminence on which the palace was built, and some other spots of rising ground, were all that the eye could now discover. The herds and flocks left the pastures, and both the wild beasts and the tame retreated to the mountains.

This inundation confined all the princes to domestic amusements; and the attention of Rasselas was particularly seized by a poem, which Imlac rehearsed, upon the various conditions of humanity. He commanded the poet to attend him in his apartment, and recite his verses a second time; then entering into familiar talk, he thought himself happy in having found a man who knew the world so well, and could so skilfully paint the scenes of life. He asked a thousand questions about things, to which, though common to all other mortals, his confinement from childhood had kept him a stranger. The poet pitied his ignorance, and loved his curiosity, and entertained him from day to day with novelty and instruction, so that the prince regretted the necessity of sleep, and longed till the morning should renew his pleasure.

As they were sitting together, the prince commanded Imlac to relate his history, and to tell by what accident he was forced, or by what motive induced, to close his life in the happy valley. As he was going to begin his narrative, Rasselas was called to a concert, and obliged to restrain his curiosity till the evening.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC.

THE close of the day is, in the regions of the torrid zone, the only season of diversion and entertainment, and it was therefore midnight before the music ceased, and the princesses retired. Rasselas then called for his companion, and required him to begin the story of his life.

"Sir," said Imlac, "my history will not be long: the life that is devoted to knowledge passes silently away, and is very little diversified by events. To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire and answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar. He wanders about the world without pomp or terror, and is neither known nor valued but by men like himself.

"I was born in the kingdom of Goiama, at no great distance from the fountain of the Nile. My father was a wealthy merchant, who traded between the inland countries of Africk[1] and the ports of the Red Sea. He was honest, frugal, and diligent, but of mean[1] sentiments and narrow comprehension; he desired only to be rich, and to conceal his riches, lest he should be spoiled by the governors of the province."

"Surely," said the prince, "my father must be negli-

gent of his charge, if any man in his dominions dares take that which belongs to another. Does he not know that kings are accountable for injustice permitted as well as done? If I were emperor, not the meanest of my subjects should be oppressed with impunity. My blood boils when I am told that a merchant durst not enjoy his honest gains, for fear of losing them by the rapacity of power. Name the governor who robbed the people, that I may declare his crimes to the emperor."

"Sir," said Imlac, "your ardor is the natural effect of virtue animated by youth: the time will come when you will acquit your father, and perhaps hear with less impatience of the governor. Oppression is, in the Abyssinian dominions, neither frequent nor tolerated; but no form of government has been yet discovered, by which cruelty can be wholly prevented. Subordination supposes power on one part, and subjection on the other; and if power be in the hands of men, it will sometimes be abused. The vigilance of the supreme magistrate may do much, but much will still remain undone. He can never know all the crimes that are committed, and can seldom punish all that he knows."

"This," said the prince, "I do not understand; but I had rather hear thee than dispute. Continue thy narration."

"My father," proceeded Imlac, "originally intended that I should have no other education, than such as might qualify me for commerce; and discovering in me great strength of memory and quickness of apprehension, often declared his hope that I should be some time the richest man in Abyssinia."

"Why," said the prince, "did thy father desire the increase of his wealth, when it was already greater than he durst discover[1] or enjoy? I am unwilling to doubt thy veracity, yet inconsistencies cannot both be true."

"Inconsistencies," answered Imlac, "cannot both be right; but, imputed to man, they may both be true. Yet diversity is not inconsistency. My father might expect a time of greater security. However, some desire is necessary to keep life in motion; and he whose real wants are supplied must admit those of fancy."

"This," said the prince "I can in some measure conceive. I repent that I interrupted thee."

"With this hope," proceeded Imlac, "he sent me to school; but when I had once found the delight of knowledge, and felt the pleasure of intelligence and the pride of invention,[1] I began silently to despise riches, and determined to disappoint the purpose of my father, whose grossness of conception raised my pity. I was twenty years old before his tenderness would expose me to the fatigue of travel, in which time I had been instructed, by successive masters, in all the literature of my native country. As every hour taught me something new, I lived in a continual course of gratification; but, as I advanced towards manhood, I lost much of the reverence with which I had been used to look on my instructors; because when the lesson was ended, I did not find them wiser or better than common men.

"At length my father resolved to initiate me in commerce, and, opening one of his subterranean treasuries, counted out ten thousand pieces of gold. 'This, young

man,' said he, 'is the stock with which you must negotiate. I began with less than the fifth part, and you see how diligence and parsimony have increased it. This is your own to waste or to improve. If you squander it by negligence or caprice, you must wait for my death before you will be rich; if in four years you double your stock, we will thenceforward let subordination cease, and live together as friends and partners; for he shall be always equal with me, who is equally skilled in the art of growing rich.'

"We laid our money upon camels, concealed in bales of cheap goods, and travelled to the shore of the Red Sea. When I cast my eye on the expanse of waters, my heart bounded like that of a prisoner escaped. I felt an inextinguishable curiosity kindle in my mind, and resolved to snatch this opportunity of seeing the manners of other nations, and of learning sciences unknown in Abyssinia.

"I remembered that my father had obliged me to the improvement of my stock, not by a promise which I ought not to violate, but by a penalty which I was at liberty to incur; and therefore determined to gratify my predominant desire, and, by drinking at the fountains of knowledge, to quench the thirst of curiosity.

"As I was supposed to trade without connection with my father, it was easy for me to become acquainted with the master of a ship, and procure a passage to some other country. I had no motives of choice to regulate my voyage; it was sufficient for me that, wherever I wandered, I should see a country which I had not seen before. I therefore entered a ship bound for Surat, having left a letter for my father declaring my intention.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"WHEN I first entered upon the world of waters, and lost sight of land, I looked round about me with pleasing terror, and thinking my soul enlarged by the boundless prospect, imagined that I could gaze round forever without satiety; but in a short time I grew weary of looking on barren uniformity, where I could only see again what I had already seen. I then descended into the ship, and doubted for a while whether all my future pleasures would not end like this, in disgust and disappointment. Yet, surely, said I, the ocean and the land are very different; the only variety of water is rest and motion, but the earth has mountains and valleys, deserts and cities; it is inhabited by men of different customs and contrary opinions; and I may hope to find variety in life, though I should miss it in nature.

"With this thought I quieted my mind; and amused myself during the voyage, sometimes by learning from the sailors the art of navigation, which I have never practised, and sometimes by forming schemes for my conduct in different situations, in not one of which I have been ever placed.

"I was almost weary of my naval[1] amusements when

we landed safely at Surat. I secured my money, and purchasing some commodities for show, joined myself to a caravan that was passing into the inland country. My companions, for some reason or other, conjecturing that I was rich, and, by my inquiries and admiration, finding that I was ignorant, considered me as a novice whom they had a right to cheat, and who was to learn at the usual expense the art of fraud. They exposed me to the theft of servants and the exaction of officers, and saw me plundered upon false pretences, without any advantage to themselves but that of rejoicing in the superiority of their own knowledge."

"Stop a moment," said the prince. "Is there such depravity in man, as that he should injure another without benefit to himself? I can easily conceive that all are pleased with superiority; but your ignorance was merely accidental, which, being neither your crime nor your folly, could afford them no reason to applaud themselves; and the knowledge which they had, and which you wanted, they might as effectually have shown by warning as betraying you."

"Pride," said Imlac, "is seldom delicate, it will please itself with very mean advantages; and envy feels not its own happiness, but when it may be compared with the misery of others. They were my enemies, because they grieved to think me rich; and my oppressors, because they delighted to find me weak."

"Proceed," said the prince: "I doubt not of the facts which you relate, but imagine that you impute them to mistaken motives."

"In this company," said Imlac, "I arrived at Agra, the capital of Indostan, the city in which the Great Mogul commonly resides. I applied myself to the language of the country, and in a few months was able to converse with the learned men; some of whom I found morose and reserved, and others easy and communicative; some were unwilling to teach another what they had with difficulty learned themselves; and some showed that the end of their studies was to gain the dignity of instructing.

"To the tutor of the young princes I recommended myself so much, that I was presented to the emperor as a man of uncommon knowledge. The emperor asked me many questions concerning my country and my travels; and though I cannot now recollect anything that he uttered above the power of a common man, he dismissed me astonished at his wisdom, and enamoured of his goodness.

"My credit was now so high, that the merchants with whom I had travelled, applied to me for recommendations to the ladies of the court. I was surprised at their confidence of solicitation, and gently reproached them with their practices on the road. They heard me with cold indifference, and showed no tokens of shame or sorrow.

"They then urged their request with the offer of a bribe; but what I would not do for kindness, I would not do for money, and refused them, not because they had injured me, but because I would not enable them to injure others; for I knew they would have made use of my credit to cheat those who should buy their wares.

"Having resided at Agra till there was no more to be learned, I travelled into Persia, where I saw many remains of ancient magnificence, and observed many new accommodations[1] of life. The Persians are a nation eminently social, and their assemblies afforded me daily opportunities of remarking characters and manners, and of tracing human nature through all its variations.

"From Persia I passed into Arabia, where I saw a nation at once pastoral and warlike; who live without any settled habitation; whose only wealth is their flocks and herds; and who have yet carried on through all ages an hereditary war with all mankind, though they neither covet nor envy their possessions."

CHAPTER X.

IMLAC'S HISTORY CONTINUED. A DISSERTATION UPON POETRY.

"WHEREVER I went, I found that poetry was considered as the highest learning, and regarded with a veneration somewhat approaching to that which man would pay to angelic nature. And yet it fills me with wonder, that, in almost all countries, the most ancient poets are considered as the best: whether it be that every other kind of knowledge is an acquisition gradually attained, and poetry is a gift conferred at once; or that the first poetry of every nation surprised them as a novelty, and retained the credit by consent, which it received by accident at first; or whether, as the province of poetry is to describe nature and passion, which are always the same, the first writers took possession of the most striking objects for description, and the most probable occurrences for fiction, and left nothing to those that followed them, but transcription of the same events, and new combinations of the same images:—whatever be the reason, it is commonly observed that the early writers are in possession of nature, and their followers of art; that the first excel in strength and invention,[1] and the latter in elegance and refinement.

"I was desirous to add my name to this illustrious fraternity. I read all the poets of Persia and Arabia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are suspended in the mosque of Mecca.[7] But I soon found that no man was ever great by imitation. My desire of excellence impelled me to transfer my attention to nature and to life. Nature was to be my subject, and men to be my auditors: I could never describe what I had not seen; I could not hope to move those with delight or terror, whose interests and opinions I did not understand.

"Being now resolved to be a poet, I saw everything with a new purpose; my sphere of attention was suddenly magnified; no kind of knowledge was to be overlooked. I ranged mountains and deserts for images and resemblances, and pictured upon my mind every tree of the forest and flower of the valley. I observed with equal care the crags of the rock and the pinnacles of the palace. Sometimes I wandered along the mazes of the rivulet, and sometimes watched the changes of the summer clouds. To a poet nothing can be useless. Whatever is beautiful, and whatever is dreadful, must be familiar to his imagination: he must be conversant with all that is awfully vast or elegantly little. The plants of the garden, the animals of the wood, the minerals of the earth, and meteors of the sky, must all concur to store his mind with inexhaustible variety: for every idea is useful for the enforcement or decoration of moral or religious truth; and he who knows most, will have most power of diversifying his scenes, and of gratifying his

reader with remote allusions and unexpected instruction.

"All the appearances of nature I was therefore careful to study; and every country which I have surveyed has contributed something to my poetical powers."

"In so wide a survey," said the prince, "you must surely have left much unobserved. I have lived, till now, within the circuit of these mountains, and yet cannot walk abroad without the sight of something which I had never beheld before, or never heeded."

"The business of a poet," said Imlac, "is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances. He does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest: he is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features, as recall the original to every mind; and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked, and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.[8]

"But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet: he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition, observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influences of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondence of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age and country; he

must consider right and wrong in their abstracted[1] and invariable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental[1] truths, which will always be the same. He must therefore content himself with the slow progress of his name, contemn the applause of his own time, and commit his claims to the justice of posterity. He must write as the interpreter of nature and the legislator of mankind, and consider himself as presiding over the thoughts and manners of future generations; as a being superior to time and place.

"His labor is not yet at an end; he must know many languages and many sciences; and, that his style may be worthy of his thoughts, must, by incessant practice, familiarize to himself every delicacy of speech and grace of harmony."

be too long[1] to hear the arguments on both sides; you, that have considered them, tell me the result."

"Pilgrimage," said Imlac, "like many other acts of piety, may be reasonable or superstitious, according to the principles upon which it is performed. Long journeys in search of truth are not commanded. Truth, such as is necessary to the regulation of life, is always found where it is honestly sought. Change of place is no natural cause of the increase of piety, for it inevitably produces dissipation of mind. Yet, since men go every day to view the fields where great actions have been performed, and return with stronger impressions of the event, curiosity of the same kind may naturally dispose us to view that country whence our religion had its beginning; and I believe no man surveys those awful scenes without some confirmation of holy resolutions. That the Supreme Being may be more easily propitiated in one place than in another, is the dream of idle superstition; but that some places may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon manner, is an opinion which hourly experience will justify. He who supposes that his vices may be more successfully combated in Palestine, will, perhaps, find himself mistaken; yet he may go thither without folly: he who thinks they will be more freely pardoned, dishonors at once his reason and religion."

"These," said the prince, "are European distinctions. I will consider them another time. What have you found to be the effect of knowledge? Are those nations happier than we?"

"There is so much infelicity," said the poet, "in the world, that scarce any man has leisure from his own distresses to estimate the comparative happiness of others. Knowledge is certainly one of the means of pleasure, as is confessed by the natural desire which every mind feels of increasing its ideas. Ignorance is mere privation, by which nothing can be produced: it is a vacuity in which the soul sits motionless and torpid for want of attraction; and without knowing why, we always rejoice when we learn, and grieve when we forget. I am therefore inclined to conclude that if nothing counteracts the natural consequence of learning, we grow more happy as our minds take a wider range.

"In enumerating the particular comforts of life, we shall find many advantages on the side of the Europeans. They cure wounds and diseases with which we languish and perish. We suffer inclemencies of weather which they can obviate. They have engines[1] for the despatch of many laborious works, which we must perform by manual industry. There is such communication between distant places, that one friend can hardly be said to be absent from another. Their policy removes all public inconveniences; they have roads cut through their mountains, and bridges laid over their rivers. And, if we descend to the privacies of life, their habitations are more commodious, and their possessions are more secure."

"They are surely happy," said the prince, "who have all these conveniences, of which I envy none so much as

the facility with which separated friends interchange their thoughts."

"The Europeans," answered Imlac, "are less unhappy than we, but they are not happy. Human life is everywhere a state in which much is to be endured, and little to be enjoyed."

CHAPTER XII.

THE STORY OF IMLAC CONTINUED.

"I AM not yet willing," said the prince, "to suppose that happiness is so parsimoniously distributed to mortals; nor can I believe but that, if I had the choice of life I should be able to fill every day with pleasure. I would injure no man, and should provoke no resentment; I would relieve every distress, and should enjoy the benedictions of gratitude. I would choose my friends among the wise, and my wife among the virtuous; and therefore should be in no danger from treachery or unkindness. My children should, by my care, be learned and pious, and would repay to my age what their childhood had received. What would dare to molest him who might call on every side to thousands enriched by his bounty or assisted by his power? And why should not life glide quietly away in the soft reciprocation of protection and reverence? All this may be done without the help of European refinements, which appear by their effects to be rather specious than useful. Let us leave them, and pursue our journey."

"From Palestine," said Imlac, "I passed through many regions of Asia; in the more civilized kingdoms as a trader, and among the barbarians of the mountains

as a pilgrim. At last I began to long for my native country, that I might repose, after my travels and fatigues, in the places where I had spent my earliest years, and gladden my old companions with the recital of my adventures. Often did I figure to myself those with whom I had sported away the gay hours of dawning life, sitting round me in its evening, wondering at my tales, and listening to my counsels.

"When this thought had taken possession of my mind, I considered every moment as wasted which did not bring me nearer to Abyssinia. I hastened into Egypt, and notwithstanding my impatience, was detained ten months in the contemplation of its ancient magnificence, and in inquiries after the remains of its ancient learning. I found in Cairo a mixture of all nations; some brought thither by the love of knowledge, some by the hope of gain, and many by the desire of living after their own manner without observation, and of lying hid in the obscurity of multitudes: for in a city, populous as Cairo, it is possible to obtain at the same time the gratifications of society and the secrecy of solitude.

"From Cairo I travelled to Suez, and embarked on the Red Sea, passing along the coast till I arrived at the port from which I had departed twenty years before. Here I joined myself to a caravan, and re-entered my native country.

"I now expected the caresses of my kinsmen and the congratulations of my friends, and was not without hope that my father, whatever value he had set upon riches, would own with gladness and pride a son who was able

to add to the felicity and honor of the nation. But I was soon convinced that my thoughts were vain. My father had been dead fourteen years, having divided his wealth among my brothers, who were removed to some other provinces. Of my companions, the greater part were in the grave; of the rest, some could with difficulty remember me, and some considered me as one corrupted by foreign manners.

"A man used to vicissitudes, is not easily dejected. I forgot, after a time, my disappointments, and endeavored to recommend myself to the nobles of the kingdom; they admitted me to their tables, heard my story, and dismissed me. I opened a school, and was prohibited to teach. I then resolved to sit down in the quiet of domestic life, and addressed a lady that was fond of my conversation, but rejected my suit because my father was a merchant.

"Wearied at last with solicitation and repulses, I resolved to hide myself forever from the world, and depend no longer on the opinion or caprice of others. I waited for the time when the gate of the happy valley should open, that I might bid farewell to hope and fear: the day came; my performance was distinguished with favor; and I resigned myself with joy to perpetual confinement."

"Hast thou here found happiness at last?" said Rasselas. "Tell me without reserve: art thou content with thy condition? or, dost thou wish to be again wandering and inquiring? All the inhabitants of the valley celebrate their lot, and at the annual visit

of the emperor, invite others to partake of their felicity."

"Great Prince," said Imlac, "I shall speak the truth; I know not one of all your attendants, who does not lament the hour when he entered this retreat. I am less unhappy than the rest, because I have a mind replete with images, which I can vary and combine at pleasure. I can amuse my solitude by the renovation of the knowledge which begins to fade from my memory, and by recollection of the incidents of my past life. Yet all this ends in the sorrowful consideration that my acquirements are now useless, and that none of my pleasures can be again enjoyed. The rest, whose minds have no impression but of the present moment, are either corroded by malignant passions, or sit stupid in the gloom of perpetual vacancy."

"What passions can infest those," said the prince, "who have no rivals? We are in a place where impotence precludes malice, and where all envy is repressed by community of enjoyments."

"There may be community," said Imlac, "of material possessions, but there can never be community of love or of esteem. It must happen that one will please more than another; he that knows himself despised, will always be envious; and still more envious and malevolent, if he is condemned to live in the presence of those who despise him. The invitations by which they allure others to a state which they feel to be wretched, proceed from the natural malignity of hopeless misery. They are weary of themselves and of each other, and expect

to find relief in new companions. They envy the liberty which their folly has forfeited, and would gladly see all mankind imprisoned like themselves.

"From this crime, however, I am wholly free. No man can say that he is wretched by my persuasion. I look with pity on the crowds who are annually soliciting admission to captivity, and wish that it were lawful for me to warn them of their danger."

"My dear Imlac," said the prince, "I will open to thee my whole heart. I have long meditated an escape from the happy valley. I have examined the mountains on every side, but find myself insuperably barred: teach me the way to break my prison; thou shalt be the companion of my flight, the guide of my rambles, the partner of my fortune, and my sole director in the choice of life."

"Sir," answered the poet, "your escape will be difficult, and, perhaps, you may soon repent your curiosity. The world, which you figure to yourself smooth and quiet as the lake in the valley, you will find a sea foaming with tempests, and boiling with whirlpools: you will be sometimes overwhelmed by the waves of violence, and sometimes dashed against the rocks of treachery. Amidst wrongs and frauds, competitions and anxieties, you will wish a thousand times for these seats of quiet, and willingly quit hope to be free from fear."

"Do not seek to deter me from my purpose," said the prince. "I am impatient to see what thou hast seen; and since thou art thyself weary of the valley, it is evi-

dent that thy former state was better than this. Whatever be the consequence of my experiment, I am resolved to judge with mine own eyes of the various conditions of men, and then to make deliberately my choice of life."

"I am afraid," said Imlac, "you are hindered by stronger restraints than my persuasions; yet, if your determination is fixed, I do not counsel you to despair. Few things are impossible to diligence and skill."

CHAPTER XIII.

RASSELAS DISCOVERS THE MEANS OF ESCAPE.

THE prince now dismissed his favorite to rest; but the narrative of wonders and novelties filled his mind with perturbation. He revolved all that he had heard, and prepared innumerable questions for the morning.

Much of his uneasiness was now removed. He had a friend to whom he could impart his thoughts, and whose experience could assist him in his designs. His heart was no longer condemned to swell with silent vexation. He thought that even the happy valley might be endured with such a companion, and that if they could range the world together, he should have nothing further to desire.

In a few days the water was discharged, and the ground dried. The prince and Imlac then walked out together, to converse without the notice of the rest. The prince, whose thoughts were always on the wing, as he passed by the gate, said, with a countenance of sorrow, "Why art thou so strong, and why is man so weak?"

"Man is not weak," answered his companion; "knowledge is more than equivalent to force. The master of mechanics laughs at strength. I can burst the gate, but

cannot do it secretly. Some other expedient must be tried."

As they were walking on the side of the mountain, they observed that the coneys, which the rain had driven from their burrows, had taken shelter among the bushes, and formed holes behind them, tending upwards in an oblique line. "It has been the opinion of antiquity," said Imlac, "that human reason borrowed many arts from the instinct of animals; let us, therefore, not think ourselves degraded by learning from the coney. We may escape by piercing the mountain in the same direction. We will begin where the summit hangs over the middle part, and labor upward till we shall issue up beyond the prominence."

The eyes of the prince, when he heard this proposal, sparkled with joy. The execution was easy, and the success certain.

No time was now lost. They hastened early in the morning to choose a place proper for their mine.[1] They clambered with great fatigue among crags and brambles, and returned without having discovered any part that favored their design. The second and the third day were spent in the same manner, and with the same frustration. But, on the fourth, they found a small cavern, concealed by a thicket, where they resolved to make their experiment.

Imlac procured instruments proper to hew stone and remove earth, and they fell to their work on the next day with more eagerness than vigor: they were presently exhausted by their efforts, and sat down to pant upon the

grass. The prince, for a moment, appeared to be discouraged. "Sir," said his companion, "practice will enable us to continue our labor for a longer time; mark, however, how far we have advanced, and you will find that our toil will some time have an end. Great works are performed, not by strength, but perseverance: yonder palace was raised by single stones, yet you see its height and spaciousness. He that shall walk with vigor three hours a day, will pass in seven years a space equal to the circumference of the globe."

They returned to their work day after day, and, in a short time, found a fissure in the rock, which enabled them to pass far with very little obstruction. This Rasselas considered as a good omen. "Do not disturb your mind," said Imlac, "with other hopes or fears than reason may suggest: if you are pleased with prognostics of good, you will be terrified likewise with tokens of evil, and your whole life will be a prey to superstition. Whatever facilitates our work is more than an omen, it is a cause of success. This is one of those pleasing surprises which often happen to active resolution. Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance."

CHAPTER XIV.

RASSELAS AND IMLAC RECEIVE AN UNEXPECTED VISIT.

THEY had now wrought their way to the middle, and solaced their toil with the approach of liberty, when the prince, coming down to refresh himself with air, found his sister Nekayah standing before the mouth of the cavity. He started and stood confused, afraid to tell his design, and yet hopeless to conceal it. A few moments determined him to repose on her fidelity, and secure her secrecy by a declaration without reserve.

"Do not imagine," said the princess, "that I came hither as a spy: I had long observed from my window that you and Imlac directed your walk every day towards the same point; but I did not suppose that you had any better reason for the preference than a cooler shade, or more fragrant bank; nor followed you with any other design than to partake of your conversation. Since, then, not suspicion but fondness has detected you, let me not lose the advantage of my discovery. I am equally weary of confinement with yourself, and not less desirous of knowing what is done or suffered in the world. Permit me to fly with you from this tasteless tranquillity, which will yet grow more loathsome when you have left me. You may deny me to accompany you, but cannot hinder me from following."

The prince, who loved Nekayah above his other sisters, had no inclination to refuse her request, and grieved that he had lost an opportunity of showing his confidence by a voluntary communication. It was therefore agreed that she should leave the valley with them; and that, in the meantime, she should watch lest any other straggler should, by chance or curiosity, follow them to the mountain.

At length their labor was at an end; they saw light beyond the prominence, and, issuing to the top of the mountain, beheld the Nile, yet a narrow current, wandering beneath them.

The prince looked round with rapture, anticipated all the pleasure of travel, and in thought was already transported beyond his father's dominions. Imlac, though very joyful at his escape, had less expectation of pleasure in the world, which he had before tried, and of which he had been weary.

Rasselas was so much delighted with a wider horizon, that he could not soon be persuaded to return into the valley. He informed his sister that the way was open, and that nothing now remained but to prepare for their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LEAVE THE VALLEY AND SEE MANY WONDERS.

THE prince and princess had jewels sufficient to make them rich, whenever they came into a place of commerce, which, by Imlac's direction, they hid in their clothes; and, on the night of the next full moon, all left the valley. The princess was followed only by a single favorite, who did not know whither she was going.

They clambered through the cavity, and began to go down on the other side. The princess and her maid turned their eyes towards every part, and, seeing nothing to bound their prospect, considered themselves as in danger of being lost in a dreary vacuity. They stopped and trembled. "I am almost afraid," said the princess, "to begin a journey of which I cannot perceive an end, and to venture into this immense plain, where I may be approached on every side by men whom I never saw." The prince felt nearly the same emotions, though he thought it more manly to conceal them.

Imlac smiled at their terrors, and encouraged them to proceed; but the princess continued irresolute till she had been imperceptibly drawn forward too far to return.

In the morning they found some shepherds in the field,

who set milk and fruits before them. The princess wondered that she did not see a palace ready for her reception, and a table spread with delicacies; but being faint and hungry, she drank the milk and ate the fruits, and thought them of a higher flavor than the products of the valley.

They travelled forward by easy journeys, being all unaccustomed to toil or difficulty, and knowing, that, though they might be missed, they could not be pursued. In a few days they came into a more populous region, where Imlac was diverted with the admiration which his companions expressed at the diversity of manners, stations, and employments.

Their dress was such as might not bring upon them the suspicion of having anything to conceal; yet the prince, wherever he came, expected to be obeyed, and the princess was frighted because those that came into her presence did not prostrate themselves before her. Imlac was forced to observe them with great vigilance, lest they should betray their rank by their unusual behavior, and detained them several weeks in the first village, to accustom them to the sight of common mortals.

By degrees the royal wanderers were taught to understand that they had for a time laid aside their dignity, and were to expect only such regard as liberality and courtesy could procure. And Imlac having, by many admonitions, prepared them to endure the tumults of a port, and the ruggedness[1] of the commercial race, brought them down to the sea-coast.

The prince and his sister, to whom everything was

new, were gratified equally at all places, and therefore remained for some months at the port, without any inclination to pass further. Imlac was content with their stay, because he did not think it safe to expose them, unpractised in the world, to the hazards of a foreign country.

At last he began to fear lest they should be discovered, and proposed to fix a day for their departure. They had no pretensions to judge for themselves, and referred the whole scheme to his direction. He therefore took passage in a ship to Suez; and, when the time came, with great difficulty prevailed on the princess to enter the vessel. They had a quick and prosperous voyage, and from Suez travelled by land to Cairo.

CHAPTER XVI.

THEY ENTER CAIRO, AND FIND EVERY MAN HAPPY.

As they approached the city, which filled the strangers with astonishment, "This," said Imlac to the prince, "is the place where travellers and merchants assemble from all the corners of the earth. You will here find men of every character, and every occupation. Commerce is here honorable: I will act as a merchant, and you shall live as strangers who have no other end of travel than curiosity; it will soon be observed that we are rich; our reputation will procure us access to all whom we shall desire to know; you will see all the conditions of humanity, and enable yourself at leisure to make your choice of life."

They now entered the town, stunned by the noise, and offended by the crowds. Instruction had not yet so prevailed over habit, but that they wondered to see themselves pass undistinguished along the street, and met by the lowest of the people without reverence or notice. The princess could not at first bear the thought of being levelled with the vulgar, and for some days continued in her chamber, where she was served by her favorite Pekuah as in the palace of the valley.

Imlac, who understood traffic, sold part of the jewels

the next day, and hired a house, which he adorned with such magnificence, that he was immediately considered as a merchant of great wealth. His politeness attracted many acquaintance,[1] and his generosity made him courted by many dependents. His table was crowded by men of every nation, who all admired his knowledge, and solicited his favor. His companions, not being able to mix in the conversation, could make no discovery[1] of their ignorance or surprise, and were gradually initiated in the world as they gained knowledge of the language.

The prince had, by frequent lectures, been taught the use and nature of money; but the ladies could not, for a long time, comprehend what the merchants did with small pieces of gold and silver, or why things of so little use should be received as equivalent to the necessaries of life.

They studied the language two years, while Imlac was preparing to set before them the various ranks and conditions of mankind. He grew acquainted with all who had anything uncommon in their fortune or conduct. He frequented the voluptuous and the frugal, the idle and the busy, the merchants and the men of learning.

The prince being now able to converse with fluency, and having learned the caution necessary to be observed in his intercourse with strangers, began to accompany Imlac to places of resort, and to enter into all assemblies, that he might make his choice of life.

For some time he thought choice needless, because all appeared to him equally happy. Wherever he went he met gayety and kindness, and heard the song of joy or

the laugh of carelessness. He began to believe that the world overflowed with universal plenty, and that nothing was withheld either from want or merit; that every hand showered liberality, and every heart melted with benevolence; "and who then," says he, "will be suffered to be wretched?"

Imlac permitted the pleasing delusion, and was unwilling to crush the hope of inexperience, till one day, having sat a while silent, "I know not," said the prince, "what can be the reason that I am more unhappy than any of our friends. I see them perpetually and unalterably cheerful, but feel my own mind restless and uneasy. I am unsatisfied with those pleasures which I seem most to court. I live in the clouds of jollity, not so much to enjoy company as to shun myself, and am only loud and merry to conceal my sadness."

"Every man," said Imlac, "may, by examining his own mind, guess what passes in the minds of others; when you feel that your own gayety is counterfeit, it may justly lead you to suspect that of your companions not to be sincere. Envy is commonly reciprocal. We are long[1] before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found; and each believes it possessed by others, to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself. In the assembly where you passed the last night, there appeared such sprightliness of air and volatility of fancy, as might have suited beings of a higher order, formed to inhabit serener regions inaccessible to care or sorrow; yet, believe me, prince, there was not one who did not dread the moment when solitude should deliver him to the tyranny of reflection."

"This," said the prince, "may be true of others, since it is true of me; yet, whatever be the general infelicity of man, one condition is more happy than another, and wisdom surely directs us to take the least evil in the choice of life."

"The causes of good and evil," answered Imlac, "are so various and uncertain, so often entangled with each other, so diversified by various relations, and so much subject to accidents which cannot be foreseen, that he who would fix his condition upon incontestible reasons of preference, must live and die inquiring and deliberating."

"But surely," said Rasselas, "the wise men, to whom we listen with reverence and wonder, chose that mode of life for themselves which they thought most likely to make them happy."

"Very few," said the poet, "live by choice. Every man is placed in his present condition by causes which acted without his foresight, and with which he did not always willingly co-operate; and therefore you will rarely meet one who does not think the lot of his neighbor better than his own."

"I am pleased to think," said the prince, "that my birth has given me at least one advantage over others, by enabling me to determine for myself. I have here the world before me; I will review it at leisure: surely happiness is somewhere to be found."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCE ASSOCIATES WITH YOUNG MEN OF SPIRIT AND GAYETY.

RASSELAS rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth," cried he, "is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted; but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images;[1] their laughter without motive; their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part. Their conduct was at once wild and mean: they laughed at order and at law; but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

The prince soon concluded that he should never be happy in a course of life of which he was ashamed. He thought it unsuitable to a reasonable being to act without a plan, and to be sad or cheerful only by chance. "Happiness," said he, "must be something solid and permanent, without fear and without uncertainty."

But his young companions had gained so much of his regard by their frankness and courtesy, that he could

not leave them without warning and remonstrance. "My friends," said he, "I have seriously considered our manners and our prospects, and find that we have mistaken our own interest. The first years of man must make provision for the last. He that never thinks never can be wise. Perpetual levity must end in ignorance; and intemperance, though it may fire the spirits for an hour, will make life short or miserable. Let us consider that youth is of no long duration, and that in maturer age, when the enchantments of fancy shall cease, and phantoms of delight dance no more about us, we shall have no comforts but the esteem of wise men, and the means of doing good. Let us, therefore, stop, while to stop is in our power: let us live as men who are sometime to grow old, and to whom it will be the most dreadful of all evils to count their past years by follies, and to be reminded of their former luxuriance of health only by the maladies which riot has produced."

They stared awhile in silence one upon another, and at last drove him away by a general chorus of continued laughter.

The consciousness that his sentiments were just, and his intentions kind, was scarcely sufficient to support him against the horror of derision. But he recovered his tranquillity, and pursued his search.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRINCE FINDS A WISE AND HAPPY MAN.

As he was one day walking in the street, he saw a spacious building, which all were, by the open doors, invited to enter. He followed the stream of people, and found it a hall or school of declamation, in which professors read lectures to their auditory. He fixed his eye upon a sage raised above the rest, who discoursed with great energy on the government of the passions. His look was venerable, his action graceful, his pronunciation clear, and his diction elegant. He showed, with great strength of sentiment and variety of illustration, that human nature is degraded and debased when the lower faculties predominate over the higher; that when fancy, the parent of passion, usurps the dominion of the mind, nothing ensues but the natural effect of unlawful government, — perturbation and confusion; that she betrays the fortresses of the intellect to rebels, and excites her children to sedition against reason their lawful sovereign. He compared reason to the sun, of which the light is constant, uniform, and lasting; and fancy to a meteor, of bright but transitory lustre, irregular in its motion, and delusive in its direction.

He then communicated the various precepts given

from time to time for the conquest of passion, and displayed the happiness of those who had obtained the important victory, after which man is no longer the slave of fear, nor the fool of hope; is no more emaciated by envy, inflamed by anger, emasculated by tenderness, or depressed by grief; but walks on calmly through the tumults or privacies of life, as the sun pursues alike his course through the calm or the stormy sky.

He enumerated many examples of heroes immovable by pain or pleasure, who looked with indifference on those modes or accidents to which the vulgar give the names of good and evil. He exhorted his hearers to lay aside their prejudices, and arm themselves against the shafts of malice or misfortune, by invulnerable patience; concluding, that this state only was happiness, and that this happiness was in every one's power.

Rasselas listened to him with the veneration due to the instructions of a superior being, and waiting for him at the door, humbly implored the liberty of visiting so great a master of true wisdom. The lecturer hesitated a moment, when Rasselas put a purse of gold into his hand, which he received with a mixture of joy and wonder.

"I have found," said the prince at his return to Imlac, "a man who can teach all that is necessary to be known, who, from the unshaken throne of rational fortitude, looks down on the scenes of life changing beneath him. He speaks, and attention watches his lips; he reasons, and conviction closes his periods. This man shall be my future guide: I will learn his doctrines, and imitate his life."

"Be not too hasty," said Imlac, "to trust or to admire the teachers of morality: they discourse like angels, but they live like men."

Rasselas, who could not conceive how any man could reason so forcibly without feeling the cogency of his own arguments, paid his visit in a few days, and was denied admission. He had now learned the power of money, and made his way by a piece of gold to the inner apartment, where he found the philosopher, in a room half darkened, with his eyes misty, and his face pale. "Sir," said he, "you are come at a time when all human friendship is useless: what I suffer cannot be remedied; what I have lost cannot be supplied. My daughter, my only daughter, from whose tenderness I expected all the comforts of my age, died last night of a fever. My views, my purposes, my hopes are at an end: I am now a lonely being disunited from society."

"Sir," said the prince, "mortality is an event by which a wise man can never be surprised: we know that death is always near, and it should therefore always be expected."

"Young man," answered the philosopher, "you speak like one that has never felt the pangs of separation." "Have you then forgot the precepts," said Rasselas, "which you so powerfully enforced? Has wisdom no strength to arm the heart against calamity? Consider that external things are naturally variable, but truth and reason are always the same." "What comfort," said the mourner, "can truth and reason afford me? Of what

effect are they now, but to tell me that my daughter will not be restored?"

The prince, whose humanity would not suffer him to insult misery with reproof, went away convinced of the emptiness of rhetorical sound, and the inefficacy of polished periods and studied sentences.

CHAPTER XIX.

A GLIMPSE OF PASTORAL LIFE.

He was still eager upon the same inquiry; and having heard of a hermit, that lived near the lowest cataract of the Nile, and filled the whole country with the fame of his sanctity, resolved to visit his retreat, and inquire whether that felicity which public life could not afford, was to be found in solitude; and whether a man whose age and virtue made him venerable, could teach any peculiar art of shunning evils or enduring them.

Imlac and the princess agreed to accompany him; and, after the necessary preparations, they began their journey. Their way lay through the fields, where shepherds tended their flocks, and the lambs were playing upon the pasture. "This," said the poet, "is the life which has been often celebrated for its innocence and quiet; let us pass the heat of the day among the shepherds' tents, and know whether all our searches are not to terminate in pastoral simplicity."

The proposal pleased them, and they induced the shepherds, by small presents and familiar questions, to tell their opinion of their own state. They were so rude and ignorant, so little able to compare the good with the evil of the occupation, and so indistinct in

their narratives and descriptions, that very little could be learned from them; but it was evident that their hearts were cankered with discontent, that they considered themselves as condemned to labor for the luxury of the rich, and looked up with stupid malevolence toward those that were placed above them.

The princess pronounced with vehemence, that she would never suffer these envious savages to be her companions, and that she should not soon be desirous of seeing any more specimens of rustic happiness; but could not believe that all the accounts of primeval pleasures were fabulous, and was yet in doubt whether life had anything that could be justly preferred to the placid gratifications of fields and woods. She hoped that the time would come, when, with a few virtuous and elegant companions, she should gather flowers planted by her own hand, fondle the lambs of her own ewe, and listen without care, among brooks and breezes, to one of her maidens reading in the shade.

CHAPTER XX.

THE DANGER OF PROSPERITY.

On the next day they continued their journey, till the heat compelled them to look round for shelter. At a small distance they saw a thick wood, which they no sooner entered than they perceived that they were approaching the habitations of men. The shrubs were diligently cut away, to open walks where the shades were darkest; the boughs of opposite trees were artificially interwoven; seats of flowery turf were raised in vacant spaces; and a rivulet, that wantoned along the side of a winding path, had its banks sometimes opened into small basins, and its stream sometimes obstructed by little mounds of stone, heaped together to increase its murmurs.

They passed slowly through the wood, delighted with such unexpected accommodations,[1] and entertained each other with conjecturing what or who he could be, that, in those rude and unfrequented regions, had leisure and art for such harmless luxury.

As they advanced, they heard the sound of music, and saw youths and virgins dancing in the grove; and going still further, beheld a stately palace built upon a hill, surrounded with woods. The laws of Eastern hospitality allowed them to enter, and the master welcomed them like a man liberal and wealthy.

He was skilful enough in appearances soon to discern that they were no common guests, and spread his table with magnificence. The eloquence of Imlac caught his attention, and the lofty courtesy of the princess excited his respect. When they offered to depart, he entreated their stay, and was the next day still more unwilling to dismiss them than before. They were easily persuaded to stop, and civility grew up in time to freedom and confidence.

The prince now saw all the domestics cheerful, and all the face of nature smiling round the place, and could not forbear to hope he should find here what he was seeking; but when he was congratulating the master upon his possessions, he answered with a sigh, "My condition has indeed the appearance of happiness, but appearances are delusive. My prosperity puts my life in danger; the Bassa of Egypt is my enemy, incensed only by my wealth and popularity. I have been hitherto protected against him by the princes of the country; but as the favor of the great is uncertain, I know not how soon my defenders may be persuaded to share the plunder with the Bassa. I have sent my treasures into a distant country, and, upon the first alarm, am prepared to follow them. Then will my enemies riot[1] in my mansion, and enjoy the gardens which I have planted."

They all joined in lamenting his danger, and deprecating his exile; and the princess was so much disturbed with the tumult of grief and indignation, that she retired to her apartment.

They continued with their kind inviter a few days longer, and then went forward to find the hermit.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE HAPPINESS OF SOLITUDE. — THE HERMIT'S HISTORY.

THEY came on the third day, by the direction of the peasants, to the hermit's cell: it was a cavern in the side of a mountain, overshadowed with palm trees; at such a distance from the cataract, that nothing more was heard than a gentle uniform murmur, such as composed the mind to pensive meditation, especially when it was assisted by the wind whistling among the branches. The first rude essay of nature had been so much improved by human labor, that the cave contained several apartments appropriated to different uses, and often afforded lodging to travellers, whom darkness or tempests happened to overtake.

The hermit sat on a bench at the door, to enjoy the coolness of the evening. On one side lay a book with pens and papers, on the other mechanical instruments of various kinds. As they approached him unregarded, the princess observed that he had not the countenance of a man that had found, or could teach, the way to happiness.

They saluted him with great respect, which he repaid like a man not unaccustomed to the forms of courts. "My children," said he, "if you have lost your way, you

shall be willingly supplied with such conveniences for the night as this cavern will afford. I have all that nature requires, and you will not expect delicacies in a hermit's cell."

They thanked him, and, entering, were pleased with the neatness and regularity of the place. The hermit set flesh and wine before them, though he fed only upon fruits and water. His discourse was cheerful without levity, and pious without enthusiasm. He soon gained the esteem of his guests, and the princess repented of her hasty censure.

At last Imlac began thus: "I do not now wonder that your reputation is so far extended. We have heard at Cairo of your wisdom, and came hither to implore your direction for this young man and maiden in the choice of life."

"To him that lives well," answered the hermit, "every form of life is good; nor can I give any other rule for choice, than to remove from all apparent evil."

"He will remove most certainly from evil," said the prince, "who shall devote himself to that solitude which you have recommended by your example."

"I have indeed lived fifteen years in solitude," said the hermit, "but have no desire that my example should gain any imitators. In my youth I professed arms, and was raised by degrees to the highest military rank. I have traversed wide countries at the head of my troops, and seen many battles and sieges. At last, being disgusted by the preferments of a younger officer, and feeling that my vigor was beginning to decay, I was

resolved to close my life in peace, having found the world full of snares, discord, and misery. I had once escaped from the pursuit of the enemy by the shelter of this cavern, and therefore chose it for my final residence. I employed artificers to form it into chambers, and stored it with all that I was likely to want.

"For some time after my retreat, I rejoiced like a tempest-beaten sailor at his entrance into the harbor, being delighted with the sudden change of the noise and hurry of war to stillness and repose. When the pleasure of novelty went away, I employed my hours in examining the plants which grow in the valley, and the minerals which I collected from the rocks. But that inquiry is now grown tasteless and irksome. I have been for some time unsettled and distracted: my mind is disturbed with a thousand perplexities of doubt and vanities of imagination, which hourly prevail upon me, because I have no opportunities of relaxation or diversion. I am sometimes ashamed to think that I could not secure myself from vice, but by retiring from the exercise of virtue, and begin to suspect that I was rather impelled by resentment, than led by devotion, into solitude. My fancy riots in scenes of folly, and I lament that I have lost so much and have gained so little. In solitude, if I escape the example of bad men, I want likewise the counsel and conversation of the good. I have been long comparing the evils with the advantages of society, and resolve to return into the world to-morrow. The life of a solitary man will be certainly miserable, but not certainly devout."

They heard his resolution with surprise, but after a short pause, offered to conduct him to Cairo. He dug up a considerable treasure which he had hid among the rocks, and accompanied them to the city, on which, as he approached it, he gazed with rapture.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HAPPINESS OF A LIFE LED ACCORDING TO NATURE.

RASSELAS went often to an assembly of learned men, who met at stated times to unbend their minds, and compare their opinions. Their manners were somewhat coarse, but their conversation was instructive, and their disputations acute, though sometimes too violent, and often continued till neither controvertist[1] remembered upon what question they began. Some faults were almost general among them: every one was desirous to dictate to the rest, and every one was pleased to hear the genius or knowledge of another depreciated.

In this assembly Rasselas was relating his interview with the hermit, and the wonder with which he heard him censure a course of life which he had so deliberately chosen, and so laudably followed. The sentiments of the hearers were various. Some were of opinion that the folly of his choice had been justly punished by condemnation to perpetual perseverance. One of the youngest among them, with great vehemence, pronounced him a hypocrite. Some talked of the right of society to the labor of individuals, and considered retirement as a desertion of duty. Others readily allowed that there was a time when the claims of the public were satisfied,

and when a man might properly sequester[1] himself, to review his life, and purify his heart.

One, who appeared more affected with the narrative than the rest, thought it likely that the hermit would, in a few years, go back to his retreat, and perhaps, if shame did not restrain or death intercept him, return once more from his retreat into the world: "For the hope of happiness," said he, "is so strongly impressed, that the longest experience is not able to efface it. Of the present state, whatever it be, we feel, and are forced to confess, the misery; yet, when the same state is again at a distance, imagination paints it as desirable. But the time will surely come, when desire will be no longer our torment, and no man shall be wretched but by his own fault.

"This," said a philosopher, who had heard him with tokens of great impatience, "is the present condition of a wise man. The time is already come, when none are wretched but by their own fault. Nothing is more idle than to inquire after happiness, which nature has kindly placed within our reach. The way to be happy is to live according to nature, in obedience to that universal and unalterable law with which every heart is originally impressed; which is not written on it by precept, but engraven by destiny, not instilled by education, but infused at our nativity. He that lives according to nature will suffer nothing from the delusions of hope, or importunities of desire; he will receive and reject with equability of temper, and act or suffer as the reason of things shall alternately prescribe. Other men may

amuse themselves with subtle definitions, or intricate ratiocinations. Let them learn to be wise by easier means: let them observe the hind of the forest, and the linnet of the grove; let them consider the life of animals, whose motions are regulated by instinct: they obey their guide, and are happy. Let us therefore, at length, cease to dispute, and learn to live; throw away the encumbrance of precepts, which they who utter them with so much pride and pomp do not understand, and carry with us this simple and intelligible maxim, — that deviation from nature is deviation from happiness."

When he had spoken, he looked round him with a placid air, and enjoyed the consciousness of his own beneficence. "Sir," said the prince with great modesty, "as I, like all the rest of mankind, am desirous of felicity, my closest attention has been fixed upon your discourse; I doubt not the truth of a position which a man so learned has so confidently advanced: — let me only know what it is to live according to nature."

"When I find young men so humble and so docile," said the philosopher, "I can deny them no information which my studies have enabled me to afford. — To live according to nature, is to act always with due regard to the fitness arising from the relations and qualities of causes and effects; to concur with the great and unchangeable scheme of universal felicity; to co-operate with the general disposition and tendency of the present system of things."

The prince soon found that this was one of the sages

whom he should understand less as he heard him longer. He therefore bowed and was silent; and the philosopher, supposing him satisfied, and the rest vanquished, rose up, and departed with the air of a man that had co-operated with the present system.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE PRINCE AND HIS SISTER DIVIDE BETWEEN THEM THE WORK OF OBSERVATION.

RASSELAS returned home full of reflections, doubtful how to direct his future steps. Of the way to happiness he found the learned and simple equally ignorant; but, as he was yet young, he flattered himself that he had time remaining for more experiments and further inquiries. He communicated to Imlac his observations and his doubts, but was answered by him with new doubts and remarks that gave him no comfort. He therefore discoursed more frequently and freely with his sister, who had yet the same hope with himself, and always assisted him to give some reason why, though he had been hitherto frustrated, he might succeed at last.

"We have hitherto," said she, "known but little of the world: we have never yet been either great or mean. In our own country, though we had royalty, we had no power; and in this, we have not yet seen the private recesses of domestic peace. Imlac favors not our search, lest we should in time find him mistaken. We will divide the task between us; you shall try what is to be found in the splendor of courts, and I will range the shades of

humbler life. Perhaps command and authority may be the supreme blessings, as they afford most opportunities of doing good; or, perhaps, what this world can give may be found in the modest habitations of middle fortune too low for great designs, and too high for penury and distress."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE PRINCE EXAMINES THE HAPPINESS OF HIGH STATIONS.

RASSELAS applauded the design, and appeared next day with a splendid retinue at the court of the Bassa. He was soon distinguished for his magnificence, and admitted, as a prince whose curiosity had brought him from distant countries, to an intimacy with the great officers, and frequent conversation with the Bassa himself.

He was at first inclined to believe, that the man must be pleased with his own condition whom all approached with reverence and heard with obedience, and who had the power to extend his edicts to a whole kingdom. "There can be no pleasure," said he, "equal to that of feeling at once the joy of thousands all made happy by wise administration. Yet, since by the law of subordination this sublime delight can be in one nation but the lot of one, it is surely reasonable to think that there is some satisfaction more popular and accessible, and that millions can hardly be subjected to the will of a single man, only to fill his particular breast with incommunicable content."

These thoughts were often in his mind, and he fou to

no solution of the difficulty. But as presents and civilities gained him more familiarity, he found that almost every man who stood high in employment hated all the rest, and was hated by them, and that their lives were a continual succession of plots and detections, stratagems and escapes, faction and treachery. Many of those who surrounded the Bassa, were sent only to watch and report his conduct; every tongue was muttering censure, and every eye was searching for a fault.

At last the letters of revocation arrived, the Bassa was carried in chains to Constantinople, and his name was mentioned no more.

"What are we now to think of the prerogatives of power," said Rasselas to his sister; "is it without any efficacy to good? or, is the subordinate degree only dangerous, and the supreme safe and glorious? Is the Sultan the only happy man in his dominions? or, is the Sultan himself subject to the torments of suspicion and the dread of enemies?"

In a short time the second Bassa was deposed; the Sultan that had advanced him was murdered by the Janizaries, and his successor had other views and different favorites.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE PRINCESS PURSUES HER INQUIRY WITH MORE DILIGENCE THAN SUCCESS.

THE princess, in the mean time, insinuated[1] herself into many families; for there are few doors through which liberality, joined with good humor, cannot find its way. The daughters of many houses were airy[1] and cheerful; but Nekayah had been too long accustomed to the conversation of Imlac and her brother, to be much pleased with childish levity, and prattle which had no meaning. She found their thoughts narrow, their wishes low, and their merriment often artificial. Their pleasures, poor as they were, could not be preserved pure, but were embittered by petty competitions and worthless emulation. They were always jealous of the beauty of each other; of a quality to which solicitude can add nothing, and from which detraction can take nothing away. Many were in love with triflers like themselves, and many fancied that they were in love when in truth they were only idle. Their affection was not fixed on sense or virtue, and therefore seldom ended but in vexation. Their grief, however, like their joy, was transient; everything floated in their mind unconnected with the past or future, so that one desire easily gave way to

another, as a second stone cast into the water effaces and confounds the circles of the first.

With these girls she played as with inoffensive animals, and found them proud of her countenance,[1] and weary of her company.

But her purpose was to examine more deeply, and her affability easily persuaded the hearts that were swelling with sorrow to discharge their secrets in her ear; and those whom hope flattered, or prosperity delighted, often courted her to partake[1] their pleasures.

The princess and her brother commonly met in the evening, in a private summer house on the bank of the Nile, and related to each other the occurrences of the day. As they were sitting together, the princess cast her eyes upon the river that flowed before her. "Answer," said she, "great Father of Waters, thou that rollest thy floods through eighty nations, to the invocations of the daughter of thy native king. Tell me if thou waterest, through all thy course, a single habitation from which thou does not hear the murmurs of complaint?"

"You are, then," said Rasselas, "not more successful in private houses, than I have been in courts." "I have, since the last partition of our provinces," said the princess, "enabled myself to enter familiarly into many families, where there was the fairest show of prosperity and peace, and know not one house that is not haunted by some fury that destroys their quiet.

"I did not seek ease among the poor, because I concluded that there it could not be found. But I saw

many poor, whom I had supposed to live in affluence. Poverty has, in large cities, very different appearances: it is often concealed in splendor, and often in extravagance. It is the care of a very great part of mankind to conceal their indigence from the rest; they support themselves by temporary expedients, and every day is lost in contriving for the morrow.

"This, however, was an evil, which, though frequent, I saw with less pain, because I could relieve it. Yet some have refused my bounties; more offended with my quickness to detect their wants, than pleased with my readiness to succor them; and others, whose exigencies compelled them to admit my kindness, have never been able to forgive their benefactress. Many, however, have been sincerely grateful, without the ostentation of gratitude, or the hope of other favors."

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PRINCESS CONTINUES HER REMARKS UPON PRIVATE LIFE.

NEKAYAH, perceiving her brother's attention fixed, proceeded in her narrative.

"In families where there is or is not poverty, there is commonly discord: if a kingdom be, as Imlac tells us, a great family, a family likewise is a little kingdom, torn with factions, and exposed to revolutions. An unpractised observer expects the love of parents and children to be constant and equal; but this kindness seldom continues beyond the years of infancy: in a short time the children become rivals to their parents; benefits are allayed[1] by reproaches, and gratitude debased by envy.

"Parents and children seldom act in concert: each child endeavors to appropriate the esteem or fondness of the parents, and the parents, with yet less temptation, betray each other to their children; thus, some place their confidence in the father, and some in the mother, and by degrees the house is filled with artifices and feuds.

"The opinions of children and parents, of the young and the old, are naturally opposite, by the contrary effects of hope and despondence, of expectation and ex-

perience, without crime or folly on either side. The colors of life in youth and age appear different, as the face of nature in spring and winter. And how can children credit the assertions of parents, which their own eyes show them to be false?

"Few parents act in such a manner as much to enforce their maxims by the credit of their lives. The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression; the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigor, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man deifies prudence; the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candor; but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practise it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age. Thus parents and children, for the greater part, live on to love less and less; and, if those whom nature has thus closely united are the torments of each other, where shall we look for tenderness and consolation?"

"Surely," said the prince, "you must have been unfortunate in your choice of acquaintance: I am unwilling to believe, that the most tender of all relations is thus impeded in its effects by natural necessity."

"Domestic discord," answered she, "is not inevitably and fatally necessary; but yet it is not easily avoided. We seldom see that a whole family is virtuous; the good

and evil cannot well agree; and the evil can yet less agree with one another; even the virtuous fall sometimes to variance, when their virtues are of different kinds, and tending to extremes. In general, those parents have most reverence who most deserve it; for he that lives well cannot be despised.

"Many other evils infest private life. Some are the slaves of servants whom they have trusted with their affairs. Some are kept in continual anxiety by the caprice of rich relations, whom they cannot please, and dare not offend. Some husbands are imperious, and some wives perverse: and, as it is always more easy to do evil than good, though the wisdom or virtue of one can very rarely make many happy, the folly or vice of one may often make many miserable."

"If such be the general effect of marriage," said the prince, "I shall, for the future, think it dangerous to connect my interest with that of another, lest I should be unhappy by my partner's fault."

"I have met," said the princess, "with many who live single for that reason; but I never found that their prudence ought to raise envy. They dream away their time without friendship, without fondness, and are driven to rid themselves of the day, for which they have no use, by childish amusements or vicious delights. They act as beings under the constant sense of some known inferiority, that fills their minds with rancor and their tongues with censure. They are peevish at home, and malevolent abroad; and, as the outlaws of human nature, make it their business and their pleasure to disturb that

society which debars them from its privileges. To live without feeling or exciting sympathy, to be fortunate without adding to the felicity of others, or afflicted without tasting the balm of pity, is a state more gloomy than solitude: it is not retreat, but exclusion from mankind. Marriage has many pains, but celibacy has no pleasures."

"What then is to be done?" said Rasselas; "the more we inquire, the less we can resolve. Surely he is most likely to please himself that has no other inclination to regard."

CHAPTER XXVII.

DISQUISITION UPON GREATNESS.

THE conversation had a short pause. The prince, having considered his sister's observations, told her that she had surveyed life with prejudice, and supposed misery where she did not find it. "Your narrative," says he, "throws yet a darker gloom upon the prospects of futurity; the predictions of Imlac were but faint sketches of the evils painted by Nekayah. I have been lately convinced that quiet is not the daughter of grandeur or of power: that her presence is not to be bought by wealth, nor enforced by conquest. It is evident, that as any man acts in a wider compass, he must be more exposed to opposition from enmity, or miscarriage from chance; whoever has many to please or to govern, must use the ministry of many agents, some of whom will be wicked, and some ignorant; by some he will be misled, and by others betrayed. If he gratifies one he will offend another; those that are not favored will think themselves injured; and, since favors can be conferred but upon few, the greater number will be always discontented."

"The discontent," said the princess, "which is thus unreasonable, I hope that I shall always have spirit to despise, and you power to repress."

"Discontent," answered Rasselas, "will not always be without reason, under the most just and vigilant administration of public affairs. None, however attentive, can always discover that merit which indigence or faction may happen to obscure; and none, however powerful, can always reward it. Yet he that sees inferior desert advanced above him, will naturally impute that preference to partiality or caprice; and, indeed, it can scarcely be hoped that any man, however magnanimous by nature or exalted by condition, will be able to persist forever in the fixed and inexorable justice of distribution: he will sometimes indulge his own affections, and sometimes those of his favorites; he will permit some to please him who can never serve him; he will discover in those whom he loves, qualities which in reality they do not possess; and to those from whom he receives pleasure, he will in his turn endeavor to give it. Thus will recommendations sometimes prevail which were purchased by money, or by the more destructive bribery of flattery and servility.

"He that has much to do will do something wrong, and of that wrong must suffer the consequences; and, if it were possible that he should always act rightly, yet when such numbers are to judge of his conduct, the bad will censure and obstruct him by malevolence, and the good sometimes by mistake.

"The highest stations cannot therefore hope to be the abodes of happiness, which I would willingly believe to have fled from thrones and palaces to seats of humble privacy and placid obscurity. For what can hinder the

satisfaction, or intercept the expectations, of him whose abilities are adequate to his employments, who sees with his own eyes the whole circuit of his influence, who chooses by his own knowledge all whom he trusts, and whom none are tempted to deceive by hope or fear? Surely he has nothing to do but to love and to be loved, to be virtuous and to be happy."

"Whether perfect happiness would be procured by perfect goodness," said Nekayah, "this world will never afford an opportunity of deciding. But this, at least, may be maintained, that we do not always find visible happiness in proportion to visible virtue. All natural and almost all political evils, are incident alike to the bad and good: they are confounded in the misery of a famine, and not much distinguished in the fury of a faction; they sink together in a tempest, and are driven together from their country by invaders. All that virtue can afford is quietness of conscience and a steady prospect of a happier state; this may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THEY ENTER THE PYRAMID.

PEKUAH descended to the tents, and the rest entered the Pyramid: they passed through the galleries, surveyed the vaults of marble, and examined the chest in which the body of the founder is supposed to have been reposited.[1] They then sat down in one of the most spacious chambers to rest awhile, before they attempted to return.

"We have now" said Imlac, "gratified our minds with an exact view of the greatest work of man, except the wall of China.

"Of the wall it is very easy to assign the motive. It secured a wealthy and timorous nation from the incursions of barbarians, whose unskilfulness in arts made it easier for them to supply their wants by rapine than by industry, and who from time to time poured in upon the habitations of peaceful commerce, as vultures descend upon domestic fowl. Their celerity and fierceness made the wall necessary, and their ignorance made it efficacious.

"But for the Pyramids no reason has ever been given adequate to the cost and labor of the work. The narrowness of the chambers proves that it could afford no

retreat from enemies, and treasures might have been reposited,[1] at far less expense with equal security. It seems to have been erected only in compliance with that hunger of imagination which preys incessantly upon life, and must be always appeased by some employment. Those who have already all that they can enjoy, must enlarge their desires. He that has built for use, till use is supplied, must begin to build for vanity, and extend his plan to the utmost power of human performance, that he may not be soon reduced to form another wish.

"I consider this mighty structure as a monument of the insufficiency of human enjoyments. A king whose power is unlimited, and whose treasures surmount all real and imaginary wants, is compelled to solace, by the erection of a pyramid, the satiety of dominion and tastelessness of pleasures, and to amuse the tediousness of declining life, by seeing thousands laboring without end, and one stone, for no purpose, laid upon another. Whoever thou art that, not content with a moderate condition, imaginest happiness in royal magnificence, and dreamest that command or riches can feed the appetite of novelty with perpetual gratifications, survey the Pyramids, and confess thy folly!"

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS MEETS WITH AN UNEXPECTED MISFORTUNE.

THEY rose up, and returned through the cavity at which they had entered, and the princess prepared for her favorite a long narrative of dark labyrinths and costly rooms, and of the different impressions which the varieties of the way had made upon her. But when they came to their train, they found every one silent and dejected; the men discovered[1] shame and fear in their countenances, and the women were weeping in their tents.

What had happened they did not try to conjecture, but immediately inquired. "You had scarcely entered into the Pyramid," said one of the attendants, "when a troop of Arabs rushed upon us; we were too few to resist them, and too slow to escape. They were about to search the tents, set us on our camels, and drive us along before them, when the approach of some Turkish horsemen put them to flight; but they seized the lady Pekuah with her two maids, and carried them away. The Turks are now pursuing them by our instigation, but I fear they will not be able to overtake them."

The princess was overpowered with surprise and grief.

Rasselas, in the first heat of his resentment, ordered his servants to follow him, and prepared to pursue the robbers with his sabre in his hand. "Sir," said Imlac, "what can you hope from violence or valor? the Arabs are mounted on horses trained to battle and retreat; we have only beasts of burden. By leaving our present station we may lose the princess, but cannot hope to regain Pekuah."

In a short time the Turks returned, having not been able to reach the enemy. The princess burst out into new lamentations, and Rasselas could scarcely forbear to reproach them with cowardice; but Imlac was of opinion that the escape of the Arabs was no addition to their misfortune, for perhaps they would have killed their captives rather than have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THEY RETURN TO CAIRO WITHOUT PEKUAH.

THERE was nothing to be hoped from longer stay. They returned to Cairo, repenting of their curiosity, censuring the negligence of the government, lamenting their own rashness which had neglected to procure a guard, imagining many expedients by which the loss of Pekuah might have been prevented, and resolving to do something for her recovery, though none could find any thing proper to be done.

Nekayah retired to her chamber, where her women attempted to comfort her by telling her that all had their troubles, and that lady Pekuah had enjoyed much happiness in the world for a long time, and might reasonably expect a change of fortune. They hoped that some good would befall her wheresoever she was, and that their mistress would find another friend who might supply her place.

The princess made them no answer, and they continued the form of condolence, not much grieved in their hearts that the favorite was lost.

Next day the prince presented to the Bassa a memorial of the wrong which he had suffered, and a petition for redress. The Bassa threatened to punish the robbers,

but did not attempt to catch them; nor indeed could any account or description be given by which he might direct the pursuit.

It soon appeared that nothing would be done by authority. Governors being accustomed to hear of more crimes than they can punish, and more wrongs than they can redress, set themselves at ease by indiscriminate negligence, and presently [1] forget the request when they lose sight of the petitioner.

Imlac then endeavored to gain some intelligence by private agents. He found many who pretended to an exact knowledge of all the haunts of the Arabs, and to regular correspondence with their chiefs, and who readily undertook the recovery of Pekuah. Of these, some were furnished with money for their journey, and came back no more; some were liberally paid for accounts which a few days discovered [1] to be false. But the princess would not suffer any means, however improbable, to be left untried. While she was doing something, she kept her hope alive. As one expedient failed, another was suggested; when one messenger returned unsuccessful, another was despatched to a different quarter.

Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard; the hopes which they had endeavored to raise in each other grew more languid, and the princess when she saw nothing more to be tried, sunk down inconsolable in hopeless dejection. A thousand times she reproached herself with the easy compliance by which she permitted her favorite to stay behind her. "Had not my fondness," said she, "lessened my author-

ity, Pekuah had not dared to talk of her terrors. She ought to have feared me more than spectres. A severe look would have overpowered her; a peremptory command would have compelled obedience. Why did foolish indulgence prevail upon me? Why did I not speak, and refuse to hear?"

"Great princess," said Imlac, "do not reproach yourself for your virtue, or consider that as blamable by which evil has accidentally been caused. Your tenderness for the timidity of Pekuah was generous and kind. When we act according to our duty, we commit the event to him by whose laws our actions are governed, and who will suffer none to be finally punished for obedience. When, in prospect of some good, whether natural or moral, we break the rules prescribed us, we withdraw from the direction of superior wisdom, and take all consequences upon ourselves. Man cannot so far know the connection of causes and events as that he may venture to do wrong in order to do right. When we pursue our end by lawful means, we may always console our miscarriage by the hope of future recompense. When we consult only our own policy, and attempt to find a nearer way to good, by overleaping the settled boundaries of right and wrong, we cannot be happy even by success, because we cannot escape the consciousness of our fault: but if we miscarry, the disappointment is irremediably embittered. How comfortless is the sorrow of him who feels at once the pangs of guilt, and the vexation of calamity which guilt has brought upon him!

"Consider, princess, what would have been your con-

dition, if the lady Pekuah had entreated to accompany you, and being compelled to stay in the tents, had been carried away; or how would you have borne the thought, if you had forced her into the Pyramid, and she had died before you in agonies of terror."

"Had either happened," said Nekayah, "I could not have endured life till now: I should have been tortured to madness by the remembrance of such cruelty, or must have pined away in abhorrence of myself."

"This at least," said Imlac, "is the present reward of virtuous conduct, that no unlucky consequence can oblige us to repent it."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PRINCESS LANGUISHES FOR WANT OF PEKUAH.

NEKAYAH being thus reconciled to herself, found that no evil is insupportable, but that which is accompanied with consciousness of wrong. She was from that time delivered from the violence of tempestuous sorrow, and sunk into silent pensiveness and gloomy tranquillity. She sat from morning to evening recollecting all that had been done or said by her Pekuah, treasured up with care every trifle on which Pekuah had set an accidental value, and which might recall to mind any little incident or careless conversation. The sentiments of her whom she now expected to see no more, were treasured in her memory as rules of life, and she deliberated to no other end than to conjecture, on any occasion, what would have been the opinion and counsel of Pekuah.

The women by whom she was attended knew nothing of her real condition[1], and therefore she could not talk to them but with caution and reserve. She began to remit her curiosity, having no great care to collect notions which she had no convenience of uttering. Rasselas endeavored first to comfort, and afterwards to divert her; he hired musicians, to whom she seemed to listen, but did not hear them, and procured masters to instruct her in

various arts, whose lectures, when they visited her again, were again to be repeated. She had lost her taste of pleasure, and her ambition of excellence. And her mind, though forced into short excursions,[1] always recurred to the image of her friend.

Imlac was every morning earnestly enjoined to renew his inquiries, and was asked every night whether he had yet heard of Pekuah, till not being able to return the princess the answer that she desired, he was less and less willing to come into her presence. She observed his backwardness, and commanded him to attend her. "You are not," said she, "to confound impatience with resentment, or to suppose that I charge you with negligence, because I repine at your unsuccessfulness. I do not much wonder at your absence; I know that the unhappy are never pleasing, and that all naturally avoid the contagion[1] of misery. To hear complaints is wearisome alike to the wretched and the happy; for who would cloud, by adventitious grief, the short gleams of gayety which life allows us? or who that is struggling under his own evils, will add to them the miseries of another?

"The time is at hand, when none shall be disturbed any longer by the sighs of Nekayah; my search after happiness is now at an end. I am resolved to retire from the world with all its flatteries and deceits, and will hide myself in solitude, without any other care than to compose my thoughts, and regulate my hours by a constant succession of innocent occupations, till with a mind purified from all earthly desires, I shall enter into that state to which all are hastening, and in which I hope again to enjoy the friendship of Pekuah."

"Do not entangle your mind," said Imlac, "by irrevocable determinations, nor increase the burden of life by a voluntary accumulation of misery: the weariness of retirement will continue or increase when the loss of Pekuah is forgotten. That you have been deprived of one pleasure, is no very good reason for rejection of the rest."

"Since Pekuah was taken from me," said the princess, "I have no pleasure to reject or to retain. She that has no one to love or trust has little to hope. She wants the radical principle of happiness. We may, perhaps, allow, that what satisfaction this world can afford, must arise from the conjunction of wealth, knowledge, and goodness: wealth is nothing but as it is bestowed, and knowledge nothing but as it is communicated; they must therefore be imparted to others, and to whom could I now delight to impart them? Goodness affords the only comfort which can be enjoyed without a partner, and goodness may be practised in retirement."

"How far solitude may admit goodness or advance it, I shall not," replied Imlac, "dispute at present. Remember the confession of the pious hermit. You will wish to return into the world, when the image of your companion has left your thoughts." — "That time," said Nekayah, "will never come. The generous frankness, the modest obsequiousness, and the faithful secrecy of my dear Pekuah, will always be more missed, as I shall live longer to see vice and folly."

"The state of a mind oppressed with a sudden

calamity," said Imlac, "is like that of the fabulous inhabitants of the new-created earth, who when the first night came upon them, supposed that day would never return. When the clouds of sorrow gather over us, we see nothing beyond them, nor can imagine how they will be dispelled; yet a new day succeeded to the night, and sorrow is never long without a dawn of ease. But they who restrain themselves from receiving comfort, do as the savages would have done, had they put out their eyes when it was dark. Our minds, like our bodies, are in continual flux; something is hourly lost, and something acquired. To lose much at once is inconvenient to either, but while the vital powers remain uninjured, nature will find the means of reparation. Distance has the same effect on the mind as on the eye, and while we glide along the stream of time, whatever we leave behind us is always lessening, and that which we approach increasing, in magnitude. Do not suffer life to stagnate; it will grow muddy for want of motion; commit yourself again to the current of the world; Pekuah will vanish by degrees: you will meet in your way some other favorite, or learn to diffuse yourself in general conversation."

"At least," said the prince, "do not despair before all remedies have been tried; the inquiry after the unfortunate lady is still continued, and shall be carried on with yet greater diligence, on condition that you will promise to wait a year for the event, without any unalterable resolution."

Nekayah thought this a reasonable demand, and made

the promise to her brother, who had been advised by Imlac to require it. Imlac had, indeed, no great hope of regaining Pekuah; but he supposed, that if he could secure the interval of a year, the princess would be then in no danger of a cloister.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

PEKUAH IS STILL REMEMBERED. THE PROGRESS OF SORROW.

NEKAYAH, seeing that nothing was omitted for the recovery of her favorite, and having, by her promise, set her intention of retirement at a distance, began imperceptibly to return to common cares and common pleasures. She rejoiced without her own consent at the suspension of her sorrows, and sometimes caught herself with indignation in the act of turning away her mind from the remembrance of her whom yet she resolved never to forget.

She then appointed a certain hour of the day for meditation on the merits and fondness of Pekuah, and for some weeks retired constantly at the time fixed, and returned with her eyes swollen and her countenance clouded. By degrees she grew less scrupulous, and suffered any important and pressing avocation to delay the tribute of daily tears. She then yielded to less occasions; sometimes forgot what she was indeed afraid to remember, and at last wholly released herself from the duty of periodical affliction.

Her real love of Pekuah was yet not diminished. A thousand occurrences brought her back to memory, and

a thousand wants, which nothing but the confidence of friendship can supply, made her frequently regretted. She, therefore, solicited Imlac never to desist from inquiry, and to leave no art of intelligence untried, that at least she might have the comfort of knowing that she did not suffer by negligence or sluggishness. "Yet what," said she, "is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavor to attain that of which the possession cannot be secured? I shall henceforward fear to yield my heart to excellence however bright, or to fondness however tender, lest I should lose again what I have lost in Pekuah."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE PRINCESS HEARS NEWS OF PEKUAH.

In seven months, one of the messengers, who had been sent away upon the day when the promise was drawn from the princess, returned, after many unsuccessful rambles, from the borders of Nubia, with an account that Pekuah was in the hands of an Arab chief, who possessed a castle or fortress on the extremity of Egypt. The Arab, whose revenue was plunder, was willing to restore her, with her two attendants, for two hundred ounces of gold.

The price was no subject of debate. The princess was in ecstasies when she heard that her favorite was alive, and might so cheaply be ransomed. She could not think of delaying for a moment Pekuah's happiness or her own, but entreated her brother to send back the messenger with the sum required. Imlac being consulted, was not very confident of the veracity of the relater, and was still more doubtful of the Arab's faith, who might, if he were too liberally trusted, detain at once the money and the captives. He thought it dangerous to put themselves in the power of the Arab, by going into his district, and could not expect that the rover would so much expose himself as to come into the lower country, where he might be seized by the forces of the Bassa.

It is difficult to negotiate where neither will trust. But Imlac, after some deliberation, directed the messenger to propose, that Pekuah should be conducted by ten horsemen to the monastery of St. Anthony, which is situated in the deserts of Upper Egypt, where she should be met by the same number, and her ransom should be paid.

That no time might be lost, as they expected that the proposal would not be refused, they immediately began their journey to the monastery; and when they arrived, Imlac went forward with the former messenger to the Arab's fortress. Rasselas was desirous to go with them, but neither his sister nor Imlac would consent. The Arab, according to the custom of his nation, observed the laws of hospitality with great exactness to those who put themselves into his power, and, in a few days, brought Pekuah with her maids, by easy journeys, to the place appointed, where, receiving the stipulated price, he restored her with great respect to liberty and her friends, and undertook to conduct them back towards Cairo, beyond all danger of robbery or violence.

The princess and her favorite embraced each other with transport too violent to be expressed, and went out together to pour the tears of tenderness in secret, and exchange professions of kindness and gratitude. After a few hours they returned into the refectory of the convent, where, in the presence of the prior and his brethren, the prince required of Pekuah the history of her adventures.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE LADY PEKUAH.

"At what time and in what manner I was forced away," said Pekuah, "your servants have told you. The suddenness of the event struck me with surprise, and I was at first rather stupefied, than agitated with any passion of either fear or sorrow. My confusion was increased by the speed and tumult of our flight, while we were followed by the Turks, who, as it seemed, soon despaired to overtake us, or were afraid of those whom they made a show of menacing.

"When the Arabs saw themselves out of danger, they slackened their course; and as I was less harassed by external violence, I began to feel more uneasiness in my mind. After some time, we stopped near a spring shaded with trees in a pleasant meadow, where we were set upon the ground, and offered such refreshments as our masters were partaking. I was suffered to sit with my maids apart from the rest, and none attempted to comfort or insult us. Here I first began to feel the full weight of my misery. The girls sat weeping in silence, and from time to time looked on me for succor. I knew not to what condition we were doomed, nor could conjecture where would be the place of our captivity, or whence

to draw any hope of deliverance. I was in the hands of robbers and savages, and had no reason to suppose that their pity was more than their justice, or that they would forbear the gratification of any ardor of desire, or caprice of cruelty. I, however, kissed my maids, and endeavored to pacify them by remarking that we were yet treated with decency, and that, since we were now carried beyond pursuit, there was no danger of violence to our lives.

"When we were to be set again on horseback, my maids clung round me, and refused to be parted; but I commanded them not to irritate those who had us in their power. We travelled the remaining part of the day through an unfrequented and pathless country, and came by moonlight to the side of a hill, where the rest of the troop were stationed. Their tents were pitched and their fires kindled, and our chief was welcomed as a man much beloved by his dependants.

"We were received into a large tent, where we found women who had attended their husbands in the expedition. They set before us the supper which they had provided, and I ate it rather to encourage my maids, than to comply with any appetite of my own. When the meat was taken away, they spread the carpets for repose. I was weary, and hoped to find in sleep that remission of distress which nature seldom denies. Ordering myself therefore to be undressed, I observed that the women looked very earnestly upon me, not expecting, I suppose, to see me so submissively attended. When my upper vest was taken off, they were apparently

struck with the splendor of my clothes, and one of them timorously laid her hand upon the embroidery. She then went out, and in a short time came back with another woman, who seemed to be of higher rank and greater authority. She did, at her entrance, the usual act of reverence, and taking me by the hand, placed me in a smaller tent, spread with finer carpets, where I spent the night quietly with my maids.

"In the morning, as I was sitting on the grass, the chief of the troop came towards me. I rose up to receive him, and he bowed with great respect. 'Illustrious lady,' said he, 'my fortune is better than I had presumed to hope: I am told by my women that I have a princess in my camp.' — 'Sir,' answered I, 'your women have deceived themselves and you; I am not a princess, but an unhappy stranger, who intended soon to have left this country, in which I am now to be imprisoned forever.' — 'Whoever or whencesoever you are,' returned the Arab, 'your dress, and that of your servants, show your rank to be high and your wealth to be great. Why should you, who can so easily procure your ransom, think yourself in danger of perpetual captivity? The purpose of my incursions is to increase my riches, or, more properly, to gather tribute. The sons of Ishmael are the natural and hereditary lords of this part of the continent, which is usurped by late invaders and low-born tyrants, from whom we are compelled to take by the sword what is denied to justice. The violence of war admits no distinction; the lance that is lifted at guilt and power, will sometimes fall on innocence and gentleness.'

"'How little,' said I, 'did I expect that yesterday it should have fallen upon me!'

"'Misfortunes,' answered the Arab, 'should always be expected. If the eye of hostility could learn reverence or pity, excellence like yours had been exempt from injury. But the angels of affliction spread their toils alike for the virtuous and the wicked, for the mighty and the mean. Do not be disconsolate: I am not one of the lawless and cruel rovers of the desert; I know the rules of civil[1] life; I will fix your ransom, give a passport to your messenger, and perform my stipulation with nice[1] punctuality.'

"You will easily believe that I was pleased with his courtesy: and finding that his predominant passion was desire of money, I began now to think my danger less, for I knew that no sum would be thought too great for the release of Pekuah. I told him that he should have no reason to charge me with ingratitude, if I was used with kindness, and that any ransom which could be expected for a maid of common rank would be paid; but that he must not persist[1] to rate me as a princess. He said he would consider what he should demand, and then smiling, bowed and retired.

"Soon after, the women came about me, each contending to be more officious than the other, and my maids themselves were served with reverence. We travelled onward by short journeys. On the fourth day, the chief told me that my ransom must be two hundred ounces of gold; which I not only promised him, but told him that I would add fifty more, if I and my maids were honorably treated.

"I never knew the power of gold before. From that time I was the leader of the troop. The march of every day was longer or shorter as I commanded, and the tents were pitched where I chose to rest. We now had camels and other conveniences for travel; my own women were always at my side; and I amused myself with observing the manners of the vagrant nations, and with viewing remains of ancient edifices, with which these deserted countries appear to have been, in some distant age, lavishly embellished.

"The chief of the band was a man far from illiterate: he was able to travel by the stars or the compass, and had marked, in his erratic expeditions, such places as are most worthy the notice of a passenger. He observed to me, that buildings are always best preserved in places little frequented and difficult of access: for, when once a country declines from its primitive splendor, the more inhabitants are left, the quicker ruin will be made. Walls supply stones more easily than quarries, and palaces and temples will be demolished, to make stables of granite and cottages of porphyry."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE ADVENTURES OF PEKUAH CONTINUED.

"We wandered about in this manner for some weeks, whether, as our chief pretended, for my gratification, or, as I rather suspected, for some convenience of his own. I endeavored to appear contented, where sullenness and resentment would have been of no use, and that endeavor conduced much to the calmness of my mind; but my heart was always with Nekayah, and the troubles of the night much overbalanced the amusements of the day. My women, who threw all their cares upon their mistress, set their minds at ease from the time when they saw me treated with respect, and gave themselves up to the incidental alleviations of our fatigue without solicitude or sorrow. I was pleased with their pleasure, and animated with their confidence. My condition had lost much of its terror, since I found that the Arab ranged the country merely to get riches. Avarice is an uniform and tractable vice: other intellectual distempers are different in different constitutions of mind; that which soothes the pride of one will offend the pride of another; but to the favor of the covetous there is a ready way; bring money, and nothing is denied.

"At last we came to the dwelling of our chief, a

strong and spacious house built with stone in an island of the Nile, which lies, as I was told, under the tropic. 'Lady,' said the Arab, 'you shall rest after your journey a few weeks in this place, where you are to consider yourself as sovereign. My occupation is war: I have therefore chosen this obscure residence, from which I can issue unexpected, and to which I can retire unpursued. You may now repose in security; here are few pleasures, but here is no danger.' He then led me into the inner apartments, and seating me on the richest couch, bowed to the ground. His women, who considered me as a rival, looked on me with malignity; but being soon informed that I was a great lady detained only for my ransom, they began to vie with each other in obsequiousness and reverence.

"Being again comforted with new assurances of speedy liberty, I was for some days diverted from impatience by the novelty of the place. The turrets overlooked the country to a great distance, and afforded a view of many windings of the stream. In the day I wandered from one place to another, as the course of the sun varied the splendor of the prospect, and saw many things which I had never seen before. The crocodiles and river-horses[1] are common in this unpeopled region, and I often looked upon them with terror, though I knew that they could not hurt me. For some time I expected to see mermaids and tritons, which, as Imlac has told me, the European travellers have stationed in the Nile; but no such beings ever appeared, and the Arab, when I inquired after them, laughed at my credulity.

"At night the Arab always attended me to a tower set apart for celestial observations, where he endeavored to teach me the names and courses of the stars. I had no great inclination to this study, but an appearance of attention was necessary to please my instructor, who valued himself for his skill; and, in a little while, I found some employment requisite to beguile the tediousness of time, which was to be passed always amidst the same objects. I was weary of looking in the morning on things from which I had turned away weary in the evening; I therefore was at last willing to observe the stars rather than do nothing, but could not always compose my thoughts, and was very often thinking on Nekayah, when others imagined me contemplating the sky. Soon after, the Arab went upon another expedition, and then my only pleasure was to talk with my maids about the accident by which we were carried away, and the happiness that we should all enjoy at the end of our captivity."

"There were women in your Arab's fortress," said the princess: "why did you not make them your companions, enjoy their conversation, and partake their diversions? In a place where they found business or amusement, why should you alone sit corroded with idle melancholy? or why could not you bear for a few months that condition to which they were condemned for life?"

"The diversions of the women," answered Pekuah, "were only childish play, by which the mind accustomed to stronger operations could not be kept busy. I could do all which they delighted in doing, by powers merely

sensitive, while my intellectual faculties were flown to Cairo. They ran from room to room, as a bird hops from wire to wire, in his cage. They danced for the sake of motion, as lambs frisk in a meadow. One sometimes pretended to be hurt, that the rest might be alarmed; or hid herself, that another might seek her. Part of their time passed in watching the progress of light bodies that floated on the river, and part in marking the various forms into which clouds broke in the sky.

"Their business was only needlework, in which I and my maids sometimes helped them; but you know that the mind will easily straggle from the fingers, nor will you suspect that captivity and absence from Nekayah could receive solace from silken flowers.

"Nor was much satisfaction to be hoped from their conversation: for of what could they be expected to talk? They had seen nothing, for they had lived from early youth in that narrow spot; of what they had not seen they could have no knowledge, for they could not read. They had no ideas but of the few things that were within their view, and had hardly names for anything but their clothes and their food. As I bore a superior character, I was often called to terminate their quarrels, which I decided as equitably as I could. If it could have amused me to hear the complaints of each against the rest, I might have been often detained by long stories; but the motives of their animosity were so small, that I could not listen without intercepting the tale."

"How," said Rasselas, "can the Arab, whom you repre-

sented as a man of more than common accomplishments, take any pleasure in his seraglio, when it is filled only with women like these? Are they exquisitely beautiful?"

"They do not," said Pekuah, "want that unaffecting and ignoble beauty which may subsist without sprightliness or sublimity, without energy of thought or dignity of virtue. But to a man like the Arab, such beauty was only a flower casually plucked and carelessly thrown away. Whatever pleasures he might find among them, they were not those of friendship or society. When they were playing about him, he looked on them with inattentive superiority; when they vied for his regard, he sometimes turned away disgusted. As they had no knowledge, their talk could take nothing from the tediousness of life; as they had no choice, their fondness, or appearance of fondness, excited in him neither pride nor gratitude; he was not exalted in his own esteem by the smiles of a woman who saw no other man, nor was much obliged by that regard, of which he could never know the sincerity, and which he might often perceive to be exerted, not so much to delight him as to pain a rival. That which he gave and they received as love, was only a careless distribution of superfluous time, such love as man can bestow upon that which he despises, such as has neither hope, nor fear, neither joy nor sorrow."

"You have reason, lady, to think yourself happy," said Imlac, "that you have been thus easily dismissed. How could a mind, hungry for knowledge, be willing, in an

intellectual famine, to lose such a banquet as Pekuah's conversation?"

"I am inclined to believe," answered Pekuah, "that he was for some time in suspense; for, notwithstanding his promise, whenever I proposed to despatch a messenger to Cairo, he found some excuse for delay. While I was detained in his house, he made many incursions into the neighboring countries; and, perhaps, he would have refused to discharge me, had his plunder been equal to his wishes. He returned always courteous, related his adventures, delighted to hear my observations, and endeavored to advance my acquaintance with the stars. When I importuned him to send away my letters, he soothed me with professions of honor and sincerity; and when I could be no longer decently denied, put his troop again in motion, and left me to govern in his absence. I was much afflicted by this studied procrastination, and was sometimes afraid that I should be forgotten; that you would leave Cairo, and I must end my days in an island of the Nile.

"I grew at last hopeless and dejected, and cared so little to entertain him, that he for a while more frequently talked with my maids. That he should fall in love with them or with me, might have been equally fatal, and I was not much pleased with the growing friendship. My anxiety was not long; for, as I recovered some degree of cheerfulness, he returned to me, and I could not forbear to despise my former uneasiness.

"He still delayed to send for my ransom, and would, perhaps, never have determined, had not your agent

found his way to him. The gold, which he would not fetch, he could not reject when it was offered. He hastened to prepare for our journey hither, like a man delivered from the pain of an intestine conflict. I took leave of my companions in the house, who dismissed me with cold indifference."

Nekayah having heard her favorite's relation, rose and embraced her, and Rasselas gave her a hundred ounces of gold, which she presented to the Arab for the fifty that were promised.

CHAPTER XL.

THE HISTORY OF A MAN OF LEARNING.

THEY returned to Cairo, and were so well pleased at finding themselves together, that none of them went much abroad. The prince began to love learning, and one day declared to Imlac, that he intended to devote himself to science, and pass the rest of his days in literary solitude.

"Before you make your final choice," answered Imlac, "you ought to examine its hazards, and converse with some of those who are grown old in the company of themselves. I have just left the observatory of one of the most learned astronomers in the world, who has spent forty years in unwearied attention to the motions and appearances of the celestial bodies, and has drawn out his soul in endless calculations. He admits a few friends once a month, to hear his deductions and enjoy his discoveries. I was introduced as a man of knowledge worthy of his notice. Men of various ideas and fluent conversation are commonly welcome to those whose thoughts have been long fixed upon a single point, and who find the images of other things stealing away. I delighted him with my remarks; he smiled at the narrative of my travels, and was glad to forget the constellations, and descend for a moment into the lower world.

"On the next day of vacation I renewed my visit, and was so fortunate as to please him again. He relaxed from that time the severity of his rule, and permitted me to enter at my own choice. I found him always busy, and always glad to be relieved. As each knew much which the other was desirous of learning, we exchanged our notions with great delight. I perceived that I had every day more of his confidence, and always found new cause of admiration in the profundity of his mind. His comprehension is vast, his memory capacious and retentive, his discourse is methodical, and his expression clear.

"His integrity and benevolence are equal to his learning. His deepest researches and most favorite studies are willingly interrupted for any opportunity of doing good by his counsel or his riches. To his closest retreat, at his most busy moments, all are admitted that want his assistance: 'For though I exclude idleness and pleasure, I will never,' says he, 'bar my doors against charity. To man is permitted the contemplation of the skies, but the practice of virtue is commanded.'"

"Surely," said the princess, "this man is happy."

"I visited him," said Imlac, "with more and more frequency, and was every time more enamoured of his conversation; he was sublime without haughtiness, courteous without formality, and communicative without ostentation. I was at first, great princess, of your opinion, thought him the happiest of mankind, and often congratulated him on the blessing that he enjoyed. He seemed to hear nothing with indifference but the praises of his condition, to which he always returned a general

answer, and diverted the conversation to some other topic.

"Amidst this willingness to be pleased and labor to please, I had quickly reason to imagine that some painful sentiment pressed upon his mind. He often looked up earnestly towards the sun, and let his voice fall in the midst of his discourse. He would sometimes, when we were alone, gaze upon me in silence, with the air of a man who longed to speak what he was yet resolved to suppress. He would often send for me with vehement injunctions of haste, though, when I came to him, he had nothing extraordinary to say; and sometimes, when I was leaving him, would call me back, pause a few moments, and then dismiss me.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE ASTRONOMER DISCOVERS [1] THE CAUSE OF HIS UNEASINESS.

"At last the time came when the secret burst his reserve. We were sitting together last night in the turret of his house, watching the emersion [1] of a satellite of Jupiter. A sudden tempest clouded the sky, and disappointed our observation. We sat awhile silent in the dark, and then he addressed himself to me in these words: 'Imlac, I have long considered thy friendship as the greatest blessing of my life. Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful. I have found in thee all the qualities requisite for trust, — benevolence, experience, and fortitude. I have long discharged an office which I must soon quit at the call of nature, and shall rejoice in the hour of imbecility and pain to devolve it upon thee.'

"I thought myself honored by this testimony, and protested, that whatever could conduce to his happiness would add likewise to mine.

"'Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather, and the distribution of the seasons; the sun

has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star,[1] and mitigated the fervors of the crab.[1] The winds alone, of all the elemental powers, have hitherto refused my authority, and multitudes have perished by equinoctial tempests, which I found myself unable to prohibit or restrain. I have adminstered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine. What must have been the misery of half the globe, if I had limited the clouds to particular regions, or confined the sun to either side of the equator?'

CHAPTER XLII.

THE OPINION OF THE ASTRONOMER IS EXPLAINED AND JUSTIFIED.

"I SUPPOSE he discovered in me, through the obscurity of the room, some tokens of amazement and doubt, for, after a short pause, he proceeded thus: —

"'Not to be easily credited will neither surprise nor offend me; for I am, probably, the first of human beings to whom this trust has been imparted. Nor do I know whether to deem this distinction a reward or punishment; since I have possessed it, I have been far less happy than before, and nothing but the consciousness of good intention could have enabled me to support the weariness of unremitted vigilance.'

"'How long, sir,' said I 'has this great office been in your hands?'

"'About ten years ago,' said he, 'my daily observations of the changes of the sky led me to consider, whether, if I had the power of the seasons, I could confer greater plenty upon the inhabitants of the earth. This contemplation fastened on my mind, and I sat days and nights in imaginary dominion, pouring upon this country and that the showers of fertility, and seconding every fall of rain with a due proportion of sunshine. I had yet only the

will to do good, and did not imagine that I should ever have the power.

"'One day, as I was looking on the fields withering with heat, I felt in my mind a sudden wish that I could send rain on the southern mountains, and raise the Nile to an inundation.[5] In the hurry of my imagination I commanded rain to fall; and by comparing the time of my command with that of the inundation, I found that the clouds had listened to my lips.'

"'Might not some other cause,' said I, 'produce this concurrence? the Nile does not always rise on the same day.'

"'Do not believe,' said he with impatience, 'that such objections could escape me: I reasoned long against my own conviction, and labored against truth with the utmost obstinacy. I sometimes suspected myself of madness, and should not have dared to impart this secret but to a man like you, capable of distinguishing the wonderful from the impossible, and the incredible from the false.'

"'Why, sir,' said I, 'do you call that incredible, which you know, or think you know, to be true?'

"'Because,' said he, 'I cannot prove it by any external evidence; and I know too well the laws of demonstration to think that my conviction ought to influence another, who cannot like me be conscious of its force. I therefore shall not attempt to gain credit by disputation. It is sufficient that I feel this power, that I have long possessed, and every day exerted it. But the life of man is short, the infirmities of age increase upon me,

and the time will soon come, when the regulator of the year must mingle with the dust. The care of appointing a successor has long disturbed me; the night and the day have been spent in comparisons of all the characters which have come to my knowledge, and I have yet found none so worthy as thyself.'

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE ASTRONOMER LEAVES IMLAC HIS DIRECTIONS.

"'HEAR, therefore, what I shall impart, with attention such as the welfare of a world requires. If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat! Hear me therefore with attention.

"'I have diligently considered the position of the earth and sun, and formed innumerable schemes in which I changed their situation. I have sometimes turned aside the axis of the earth, and sometimes varied the ecliptic of the sun; but I have found it impossible to make a disposition by which the world may be advantaged; what one region gains, another loses, by an imaginable alteration, even without considering the distant parts of the solar system with which we are unacquainted. Do not, therefore, in thy administration of the year, indulge thy pride by innovation; do not please thyself with thinking that thou canst make thyself renowned to all future ages by disordering the seasons. The memory of mischief is no desirable fame. Much less will it become thee to let kindness or interest

prevail. Never rob other countries of rain to pour it on thine own. For us the Nile is sufficient.'

"I promised, that when I possessed the power, I would use it with inflexible integrity; and he dismissed me, pressing my hand. 'My heart,' said he, 'will be now at rest, and my benevolence will no more destroy my quiet; I have found a man of wisdom and virtue, to whom I can cheerfully bequeath the inheritance of the sun.'"

The prince heard this narration with very serious regard; but the princess smiled, and Pekuah convulsed herself with laughter. "Ladies," said Imlac, "to mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise. Few can attain this man's knowledge, and few practise his virtues; but all may suffer his calamity. Of the uncertainties of our present state, the most dreadful and alarming is the uncertain continuance of reason."

The princess was recollected,[1] and the favorite was abashed. Rasselas, more deeply affected, inquired of Imlac, whether he thought such maladies of the mind frequent, and how they were contracted.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE DANGEROUS PREVALENCE OF IMAGINATION.

"DISORDERS of intellect," answered Imlac, "happen much more often than superficial observers will easily believe. Perhaps, if we speak with rigorous exactness, no human mind is in its right state. There is no man whose imagination does not sometimes predominate over his reason, who can regulate his attention wholly by his will, and whose ideas will come and go at his command. No man will be found in whose mind airy notions do not sometimes tyrannize, and force him to hope or fear beyond the limits of sober probability. All power of fancy over reason is a degree of insanity; but while this power is such as we can control and repress, it is not visible to others, nor considered as any depravation of the mental faculties: it is not pronounced madness, but when it becomes ungovernable and apparently influences speech or action.

"To indulge the power of fiction, and send imagination out upon the wing, is often the sport of those who delight too much in silent speculation. When we are alone we are not always busy; the labor of excogitation is too violent to last long; the ardor of inquiry will sometimes give way to idleness or satiety. He who has

nothing external that can divert him, must find pleasure in his own thoughts, and must conceive himself what he is not; for who is pleased with what he is? He then expatiates in boundless futurity, and culls from all imaginable conditions that which for the present moment he should most desire, amuses his desires with impossible enjoyments, and confers upon his pride unattainable dominion. The mind dances from scene to scene, unites all pleasures in all combinations, and riots[1] in delights, which nature and fortune, with all their bounty, cannot bestow.

"In time some particular train of ideas fixes the attention; all other intellectual gratifications are rejected; the mind, in weariness or leisure, recurs constantly to the favorite conception, and feasts on the luscious falsehood whenever she is offended with the bitterness of truth. By degrees the reign of fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture or of anguish.

"This, sir, is one of the dangers of solitude, which the hermit has confessed not always to promote goodness, and the astronomer's misery has proved to be not always propitious to wisdom."

"I will no more," said the favorite, "imagine myself the Queen of Abyssinia. I have often spent the hours which the princess gave to my own disposal, in adjusting ceremonies and regulating the court; I have repressed the pride of the powerful and granted the petitions of

the poor; I have built new palaces in more happy situations, planted groves upon the tops of mountains, and have exulted in the beneficence of royalty, till, when the princess entered, I had almost forgotten to bow down before her."

"And I," said the princess, "will not allow myself any more to play the shepherdess in my waking dreams. I have often soothed my thoughts with the quiet and innocence of pastoral employments, till I have in my chamber heard the winds whistle, and the sheep bleat; sometimes freed the lamb entangled in the thicket, and sometimes with my crook encountered the wolf. I have a dress like that of the village maids, which I put on to help my imagination, and a pipe on which I play softly, and suppose myself followed by my flocks."

"I will confess," said the prince, "an indulgence of fantastic delight more dangerous than yours. I have frequently endeavored to image[1] the possibility of a perfect government, by which all wrong should be restrained, all vice reformed, and all the subjects preserved in tranquillity and innocence. This thought produced innumerable schemes of reformation, and dictated many useful regulations and salutary edicts. This has been the sport and sometimes the labor, of my solitude; and I start when I think with how little anguish I once supposed the death of my father and my brothers."

"Such," said Imlac, "are the effects of visionary schemes. When we first form them, we know them to be absurd, but familiarize them by degrees, and in time lose sight of their folly."

CHAPTER XLV.

THEY DISCOURSE WITH AN OLD MAN.

THE evening was now far past, and they rose to return home. As they walked along the bank of the Nile, delighted with the beams of the moon quivering on the water, they saw at a small distance an old man, whom the prince had often heard in the assembly of the sages. "Yonder," said he, "is one whose years have calmed his passions, but not clouded his reason; let us close the disquisitions of the night, by inquiring what are his sentiments of his own state, that we may know whether youth alone is to struggle with vexation, and whether any better hope remains for the latter part of life."

Here the sage approached and saluted them. They invited him to join their walk, and prattled awhile, as acquaintance that had unexpectedly met one another. The old man was cheerful and talkative, and the way seemed short in his company. He was pleased to find himself not disregarded, accompanied them to their house, and, at the prince's request, entered with them. They placed him in the seat of honor, and set wine and conserves before him.

"Sir," said the princess, "an evening walk must give to a man of learning, like you, pleasures which igno-

rance and youth can hardly conceive. You know the qualities and the causes of all that you behold, the laws by which the river flows, the periods in which the planets perform their revolutions. Everything must supply you with contemplation, and renew the consciousness of your own dignity."

"Lady," answered he, "let the gay and the vigorous expect pleasure in their excursions; it is enough that age can obtain ease. To me the world has lost its novelty: I look round, and see what I remember to have seen in happier days. I rest against a tree, and consider, that in the same shade I once disputed upon the annual overflow of the Nile with a friend who is now silent in the grave. I cast my eyes upwards, fix them on the changing moon, and think with pain on the vicissitudes of life. I have ceased to take much delight in physical truth; for what have I to do with those things which I am soon to leave!"

"You may at least recreate yourself," said Imlac, "with the recollection of an honorable and useful life, and enjoy the praise which all agree to give you."

"Praise," said the sage with a sigh "is to an old man an empty sound. I have neither mother to be delighted with the reputation of her son, nor wife to partake the honors of her husband. I have outlived my friends and my rivals. Nothing is now of much importance; for I cannot extend my interest beyond myself. Youth is delighted with applause, because it is considered as the earnest of some future good, and because the prospect of life is far extended; but to me, who am now declin-

ing to decrepitude, there is little to be feared from the malevolence of men, and yet less to be hoped from their affection or esteem. Something they may yet take away, but they can give me nothing. Riches would now be useless, and high employment would be pain. My retrospect of life recalls to my view many opportunities of good neglected, much time squandered upon trifles, and more lost in idleness and vacancy. I leave many great designs unattempted, and many great attempts unfinished. My mind is burdened with no heavy crime, and therefore I compose myself to tranquillity; endeavor to abstract my thoughts from hopes and cares, which, though reason knows them to be vain, still try to keep their old possession of the heart; expect, with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess, in a better state, that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which here I have not attained."

He arose and went away, leaving his audience not much elated with the hope of long life. The prince consoled himself with remarking that it was not reasonable to be disappointed by this account, for age had never been considered as the season of felicity, and if it was possible to be easy in decline and weakness, it was likely that the days of vigor and alacrity might be happy: that the noon of life might be bright, if the evening could be calm.

The princess suspected that age was querulous and malignant, and delighted to repress the expectations of those who had newly entered the world. She had seen

the possessors of estates look with envy on their heirs, and known many who enjoyed pleasure no longer than they could confine it to themselves.

Pekuah conjectured that the man was older than he appeared, and was willing to impute his complaints to delirious dejection; or else supposed that he had been unfortunate, and was therefore discontented; "For nothing," said she, "is more common, than to call our own condition the condition of life."

Imlac, who had no desire to see them depressed, smiled at the comforts which they could so readily procure to themselves, and remembered, that at the same age he was equally confident of unmingled prosperity, and equally fertile of consolatory expedients. He forbore to force upon them unwelcome knowledge, which time itself would too soon impress. The princess and her lady retired; the madness of the astronomer hung upon their minds, and they desired Imlac to enter upon his office, and delay next morning the rising of the sun.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE PRINCESS AND PEKUAH VISIT THE ASTRONOMER.

THE princess and Pekuah having talked in private of Imlac's astronomer, thought his character at once so amiable and so strange, that they could not be satisfied without a nearer knowledge; and Imlac was requested to find the means of bringing them together.

This was somewhat difficult: the philosopher had never received any visits from women, though he lived in a city that had in it many Europeans, who followed the manners of their own countries, and many from other parts of the world, that lived there with European liberty. The ladies would not be refused, and several schemes were proposed for the accomplishment of their design. It was proposed to introduce them as strangers in distress, to whom the sage was always accessible; but, after some deliberation, it appeared that by this artifice no acquaintance could be formed, for their conversation would be short, and they could not decently importune him often. "This," said Rasselas, "is true; but I have yet a stronger objection against the misrepresentation of your state. I have always considered it as treason against the great republic of human nature, to make any man's virtues the means of deceiving him,

whether on great or little occasions. All imposture weakens confidence, and chills benevolence. When the sage finds that you are not what you seemed, he will feel the resentment natural to a man who, conscious of great abilities, discovers that he has been tricked by understandings meaner than his own, and, perhaps, the distrust which he can never afterwards wholly lay aside, may stop the voice of counsel and close the hand of charity; and where will you find the power of restoring his benefactions to mankind, or his peace to himself?"

To this no reply was attempted, and Imlac began to hope that their curiosity would subside; but, next day, Pekuah told him she had now found an honest pretence for a visit to the astronomer, for she would solicit permission to continue under him the studies in which she had been initiated by the Arab, and the princess might go with her either as a fellow-student, or because a woman could not decently come alone. "I am afraid," said Imlac, "that he will be soon weary of your company; men advanced far in knowledge do not love to repeat the elements of their art, and I am not certain that even of the elements, as he will deliver them, connected with inferences and mingled with reflections, you are a very capable auditress."—"That," said Pekuah, "must be my care; I ask of you only to take me thither. My knowledge is, perhaps, more than you imagine it; and, by concurring always with his opinions, I shall make him think it greater than it is."

The astronomer, in pursuance of this resolution, was told that a foreign lady, travelling in search of knowl-

edge, had heard of his reputation, and was desirous to become his scholar. The uncommonness of the proposal raised at once his surprise and curiosity; and when, after a short deliberation, he consented to admit her, he could not stay without impatience till the next day.

The ladies dressed themselves magnificently, and were attended by Imlac to the astronomer, who was pleased to see himself approached with respect by persons of so splendid an appearance. In the exchange of the first civilities he was timorous and bashful; but when the talk became regular, he re-collected his powers, and justified the character which Imlac had given. Inquiring of Pekuah what could have turned her inclination towards astronomy, he received from her a history of her adventure at the Pyramid, and of the time passed in the Arab's island. She told her tale with ease and elegance, and her conversation took possession of his heart. The discourse was then turned to astronomy: Pekuah displayed what she knew: he looked upon her as a prodigy of genius, and entreated her not to desist from a study which she had so happily begun.

They came again and again, and were every time more welcome than before. The sage endeavored to amuse them, that they might prolong their visits, for he found his thoughts grow brighter in their company; the clouds of solicitude vanished by degrees, as he forced himself to entertain them, and he grieved when he was left at their departure to his old employment of regulating the seasons.

The princess and her favorite had now watched his

lips for several months, and could not catch a single word from which they could judge whether he continued, or not, in the opinion of his preternatural commission. They often contrived to bring him to an open declaration; but he easily eluded all their attacks, and, on which side soever they pressed him, escaped from them to some other topic.

As their familiarity increased, they invited him often to the house of Imlac, where they distinguished him by extraordinary respect. He began gradually to delight in sublunary pleasures. He came early, and departed late; labored to recommend himself by assiduity and compliance; excited their curiosity after new arts, that they might still want his assistance; and when they made any excursion of pleasure or inquiry, entreated to attend them.

By long experience of his integrity and wisdom, the prince and his sister were convinced that he might be trusted without danger; and lest he should draw any false hopes from the civilities which he received, discovered[1] to him their condition,[1] with the motives of their journey, and required his opinion on the choice of life.

"Of the various conditions which the world spreads before you, which you shall prefer," said the sage, "I am not able to instruct you. I can only tell that I have chosen wrong. I have passed my time in study without experience; in the attainment of sciences which can, for the most part, be but remotely useful to mankind. I have purchased knowledge at the expense of all the

common comforts of life; I have missed the endearing elegance[1] of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness. If I have obtained any prerogatives above other students, they have been accompanied with fear, disquiet, and scrupulosity; but even of these prerogatives, whatever they were, I have, since my thoughts have been diversified by more intercourse with the world, begun to question the reality. When I have been for a few days lost in pleasing dissipation, I am always tempted to think that my inquiries have ended in error, and that I have suffered much and suffered it in vain."

Imlac was delighted to find that the sage's understanding was breaking through its mists, and resolved to detain him from the planets till he should forget his task of ruling them, and reason should recover its original influence.

From this time the astronomer was received into familiar friendship, and partook of all their projects and pleasures; his respect kept him attentive, and the activity of Rasselas did not leave much time unengaged. Something was always to be done: the day was spent in making observations which furnished talk for the evening, and the evening was closed with a scheme for the morrow.

The sage confessed to Imlac, that since he had mingled in the gay tumults of life, and divided his hours by a succession of amusements, he found the conviction of his authority over the skies fade gradually from his mind, and began to trust less to an opinion which he

never could prove to others, and which he now found subject to variation, from causes in which reason had no part. "If I am accidentally left alone for a few hours," said he, "my inveterate persuasion rushes upon my soul, and my thoughts are chained down by some irresistible violence; but they are soon disentangled by the prince's conversation, and instantaneously released at the entrance of Pekuah. I am like a man habitually afraid of spectres, who is set at ease by a lamp, and wonders at the dread which harassed him in the dark; yet, if his lamp be extinguished, feels again the terrors which he knows that when it is light he shall feel no more. But I am sometimes afraid, lest I indulge my quiet by criminal negligence, and voluntarily forget the great charge with which I am intrusted. If I favor myself in a known error, or am determined by my own ease in a doubtful question of this importance, how dreadful is my crime!"

"No disease of the imagination," answered Imlac, "is so difficult of cure as that which is complicated with the dread of guilt; fancy and conscience then act interchangeably upon us, and so often shift their places, that the illusions of one are not distinguished from the dictates of the other. If fancy presents images not moral or religous, the mind drives them away when they give it pain; but when melancholic notions take the form of duty, they lay hold on the faculties without opposition, because we are afraid to exclude or banish them. For this reason the superstitious are often melancholy, and the melancholy almost always superstitious.

"But do not let the suggestions of timidity overpower your better reason: the danger of neglect can be but as the probability of the obligation, which, when you consider it with freedom, you find very little, and that little growing every day less. Open your heart to the influence of the light which from time to time breaks in upon you; when scruples importune you, which you in your lucid moments know to be vain, do not stand to parley, but fly to business, or to Pekuah, and keep this thought always prevalent, that you are only one atom of the mass of humanity, and have neither such virtue nor vice, as that you should be singled out for supernatural favors or afflictions."

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE PRINCE ENTERS, AND BRINGS A NEW TOPIC.

"ALL this," said the astronomer, "I have often thought, but my reason has been so long subjugated by an uncontrollable and overwhelming idea, that it durst not confide in its own decisions. I now see how fatally I betrayed my quiet, by suffering chimeras to prey upon me in secret; but melancholy shrinks from communication, and I never found a man before to whom I could impart my troubles, though I had been certain of relief. I rejoice to find my own sentiments confirmed by yours, who are not easily deceived, and can have no motive or purpose to deceive. I hope that time and variety will dissipate the gloom that has so long surrounded me, and the latter part of my days will be spent in peace."

"Your learning and virtue," said Imlac, "may justly give you hopes."

Rasselas then entered, with the princess and Pekuah, and inquired whether they had contrived any new diversion for the next day. "Such," said Nekayah, "is the state of life, that none are happy but by the anticipation of change: the change itself is nothing; when we have made it, the next wish is to change again. The

world is not yet exhausted; let me see something to-morrow which I never saw before."

"Variety," said Rasselas, "is so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted me by the recurrence of its luxuries; yet I could not forbear to reproach myself with impatience, when I saw the monks of St. Anthony support, without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship."

"Those men," answered Imlac, "are less wretched in their silent convent, than the Abyssinian princes in their prison of pleasure. Whatever is done by the monks is incited by an adequate and reasonable motive. Their labor supplies them with necessaries; it therefore cannot be omitted, and is certainly rewarded. Their devotion prepares them for another state, and reminds them of its approach while it fits them for it. Their time is regularly distributed: one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity."

"Do you think," said Nekayah, "that the monastic rule is a more holy and less imperfect state than any other? May not he equally hope for future happiness who converses openly with mankind, who succors the distressed by his charity, instructs the ignorant by his learning, and contributes by his industry to the general system of life; even though he should omit some of

the mortifications which are practised in the cloister, and allow himself such harmless delights as his condition may place within his reach?"

"This," said Imlac, "is a question which has long divided the wise, and perplexed the good. I am afraid to decide on either part. He that lives well in the world is better than he that lives well in a monastery. But, perhaps, every one is not able to stem the temptations of public life; and if he cannot conquer, he may properly retreat. Some have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain. And many are dismissed by age and diseases from the more laborious duties of society. In monasteries, the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that, perhaps, there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction, with a few associates serious as himself."

"Such," said Pekuah, "has often been my wish, and I have heard the princess declare, that she would not willingly die in a crowd."

"The liberty of using harmless pleasures," proceeded Imlac, "will not be disputed; but it is still to be examined what pleasures are harmless. The evil of any pleasure that Nekayah can image,[1] is not in the act itself, but in its consequences. Pleasure, in itself harmless,

may become mischievous, by endearing to us a state which we know to be transient and probatory, and withdrawing our thoughts from that of which every hour brings us nearer to the beginning, and of which no length of time will bring us to the end. Mortification is not virtuous in itself, nor has any other use, but that it disengages us from the allurements of sense. In the state of future perfection, to which we all aspire, there will be pleasure without danger, and security without restraint."

The princess was silent; and Rasselas, turning to the astronomer, asked him whether he could not delay her retreat, by showing her something which she had not seen before.

"Your curiosity," said the sage, "has been so general, and your pursuit of knowledge so vigorous, that novelties are not now very easily to be found; but what you can no longer procure from the living may be given by the dead. Among the wonders of this country are the Catacombs, or the ancient repositories in which the bodies of the earliest generations were lodged, and where, by the virtue of the gums which embalmed them, they yet remain without corruption."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "what pleasure the sight of the Catacombs can afford; but, since nothing else offers, I am resolved to view them, and shall place this with many other things which I have done, because I would do something."

They hired a guard of horsemen, and the next day visited the Catacombs. When they were about to

descend into the sepulchral caves, "Pekuah," said the princess, "we are now again invading the habitations of the dead; I know that you will stay behind. Let me find you safe when I return." — "No; I will not be left," answered Pekuah, "I will go down between you and the prince."

They then all descended, and roved with wonder through the labyrinth of subterraneous passages, where the bodies were laid in rows on either side.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

IMLAC DISCOURSES ON THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

"WHAT reason," said the prince, "can be given, why the Egyptians should thus expensively preserve those carcases, which some nations consume with fire, others lay to mingle with the earth, and all agree to remove from their sight as soon as decent rites can be performed?"

"The original of ancient customs," said Imlac, "is commonly unknown, for the practice often continues when the cause has ceased; and concerning superstitious ceremonies it is vain to conjecture, for what reason did not dictate reason cannot explain. I have long believed, that the practice of embalming arose only from tenderness to the remains of relations or friends, and to this opinion I am more inclined, because it seems impossible that this care should have been general: had all the dead been embalmed, their repositories must in time have been more spacious than the dwellings of the living. I suppose only the rich or honorable were secured from corruption, and the rest left to the course of nature.

"But it is commonly supposed, that the Egyptians believed the soul to live as long as the body continued undissolved, and therefore tried this method of eluding death."

"Could the wise Egyptians," said Nekayah, "think so grossly of the soul? If the soul could once survive its separation, what could it afterwards receive or suffer from the body?"

"The Egyptians would doubtless think erroneously," said the astronomer, "in the darkness of heathenism, and the first dawn of philosophy. The nature of the soul is still disputed, amidst all our opportunities of clearer knowledge: some yet say that it may be material, who, nevertheless, believe it to be immortal."

"Some," answered Imlac, "have indeed said that the soul is material, but I can scarcely believe that any man has thought it, who knew how to think; for all the conclusions of reason enforce the immateriality of mind, and all the notices of sense and investigations of science concur to prove the unconsciousness of matter.

"It was never supposed that cogitation is inherent in matter, or that every particle is a thinking being. Yet, if any part of matter be devoid of thought, what part can we suppose to think? Matter can differ from matter only in form, density, bulk, motion, and direction of motion: to which of these, however varied or combined, can consciousness be annexed? To be round or square, to be solid or fluid, to be great or little, to be moved slowly or swiftly one way or another, are modes of material existence, all equally alien from the nature of cogitation. If matter be once without thought, it can only be made to think by some new modification; but all the modifications which it can admit are equally unconnected with cogitative powers."

"But the materialists," said the astronomer, "urge that matter may have qualities with which we are unacquainted."

"He who will determine," returned Imlac, "against that which he knows, because there may be something which he knows not, he that can set hypothetical possibility against acknowledged certainty, — is not to be admitted among reasonable beings. All that we know of matter is, that matter is inert, senseless, and lifeless; and if this conviction cannot be opposed, but by referring us to something that we know not, we have all the evidence that human intellect can admit. If that which is known may be overruled by that which is unknown, no being, not omniscient, can arrive at certainty."

"Yet let us not," said the astronomer, "too arrogantly limit the Creator's power."

"It is no limitation of omnipotence," replied the poet, "to suppose that one thing is not consistent with another, that the same proposition cannot be at once true and false, that the same number cannot be even and odd, that cogitation cannot be conferred on that which is created incapable of cogitation."

"I know not," said Nekayah, "any great use of this question. Does that immateriality, which in my opinion, you have sufficiently proved, necessarily include eternal duration?"

"Of immateriality," said Imlac, "our ideas are negative, and therefore obscure. Immateriality seems to imply a natural power of perpetual duration as a consequence of exemption from all causes of decay;

whatever perishes is destroyed by the solution of its contexture, and separation of its parts; nor can we conceive how that which has no parts, and therefore admits no solution, can be naturally corrupted or impaired."

"I know not," said Rasselas, "how to conceive anything without extension; what is extended must have parts, and you allow that whatever has parts may be destroyed."

"Consider your own conceptions," replied Imlac, "and the difficulty will be less. You will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less real than material bulk; yet an ideal form has no extension. It is no less certain, when you think on a pyramid, that your mind possesses the idea of a pyramid, than that the pyramid itself is standing. What space does the idea of a pyramid occupy more than the idea of a grain of corn? or how can either idea suffer laceration? As is the effect, such is the cause: as thought, such is the power that thinks; a power impassive [1] and indiscerptible." [1]

"But the Being," said Nekayah, "whom I fear to name, the Being which made the soul, can destroy it."

"He surely can destroy it," answered Imlac, "since, however unperishable, it receives from a superior nature its power of duration. That it will not perish by any inherent cause of decay, or principle of corruption, may be shown by philosophy; but philosophy can tell no more. That it will not be annihilated by him that made it, we must humbly learn from higher authority."

The whole assembly stood awhile silent and collected.[1]

"Let us return," said Rasselas, "from this scene of mortality. How gloomy would be these mansions of the dead to him who did not know that he should never die, that what now acts shall continue its agency, and what now thinks shall think on forever. Those that lie here stretched before us, the wise and the powerful of ancient times, warn us to remember the shortness of our present state: they were, perhaps, snatched away while they were busy like us in the choice of life."

"To me," said the princess, "the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity."

They then hastened out of the caverns, and under the protection of their guard returned to Cairo.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE CONCLUSION, IN WHICH NOTHING IS CONCLUDED.

It was now the time of the inundation of the Nile: a few days after their visit to the catacombs, the river began to rise.

They were confined to their house. The whole region being under water gave them no invitation to any excursions, and, being well supplied with materials for talk, they diverted themselves with comparisons of the different forms of life which they had observed, and with various schemes of happiness which each of them had formed.

Pekuah was never so much charmed with any place as the Convent of St. Anthony, where the Arab restored her to the princess, and wished only to fill it with pious maidens, and to be made prioress of the order; she was weary of expectation and disgust, and would gladly be fixed in some unvariable state.

The princess thought, that of all sublunary things knowledge was the best: she desired first to learn all sciences, and then proposed to found a college of learned women, in which she would preside, that, by conversing with the old, and educating the young, she might divide her time between the acquisition and com-

munication of wisdom, and raise up for the next age models of prudence, and patterns of piety.

The prince desired a little kingdom, in which he might administer justice in his own person, and see all the parts of government with his own eyes; but he could never fix the limits of his dominion, and was always adding to the number of his subjects.

Imlac and the astronomer were contented to be driven along the stream of life, without directing their course to any particular port.

Of these wishes that they had formed they well knew that none could be obtained. They deliberated awhile what was to be done, and resolved, when the inundation should cease, to return to Abyssinia.

NOTES.

I. — DICTION.

THE following words are peculiar to Johnson or are used by him in an unfamiliar sense: —

Abstracted. For "abstract."

Accommodations. Defined by Johnson as "Conveniences, things requisite to ease and refreshment."

Acquaintance. For "acquaintances."

Africk. For "Africa."

Airy. Applied to a person's disposition. Consult the dictionary.

Allay. Commonly used in Johnson's time for "alloy." Consult the dictionary for the etymology of each word.

Character. In the sense of "the part one has to play."

Chariot. Consult the dictionary for the two meanings of this term.

Civil. In the sense of "civilized."

Collected. "Thoughtful."

Condition. "Rank," or "position."

Contagion. "Contagion of his confidence," "contagion of misery." Consult the dictionary for the plain and the metaphorical meaning of the word.

Controvertist. "Disputant."

Countenance. In the sense of "favor," "good-will."

Crab. Consult the dictionary under "cancer."

Discover. In the sense of "to show," "to exhibit."

Discovery. In the sense of "disclosure," "revelation."

Dog-star. Consult the dictionary under this word and "Sirius." "To restrain the rage of the dog-star," is a poetical expression borrowed from the Latin writers, for "to moderate the heat of the dog-days."

Elegance. "Refinement," "culture."

Emersion. An astronomical term. Consult the dictionary.

Engine. "Apparatus," or "machinery."

Excursion. "Digression."

Grate. Used once by Johnson in the sense of "cage," for which it is perhaps a misprint.

Humor. "Mood" is more common at the present day except in such phrases as "good-humor," "ill-humor," and the like.

Image. "To imagine."

Images. "Flights of imagination."

Impassive. "Not susceptible of suffering."

Indiscerptible. Defined by Johnson, "incapable of being broken or destroyed by dissolution of parts."

Insinuate. Defined by Johnson, "to push gently into favor or regard." Now commonly used in a bad sense.

Intellects. "Mental faculties."

Invention. Any product of the imagination; now confined almost entirely to mechanical devices, though retained in its broader meaning in many rhetorics.

Levity. "Lightness." The technical instead of the common term.

Lonely. "Desirous of being alone."

Long. Used predicatively to denote duration of time. "We are long before we are able to think," for "it is a long time before."

Mean. "Ordinary."

Mine. Any subterranean passage. "Tunnel," is at the present time the common word for a passage-way bored through a mountain.

Naval. "Belonging to ships." Now coming to be almost exclusively used in the sense of "belonging to the navy."

Nice. "Exact," a meaning to which this abused adjective should be confined for the next few generations.

Partake. "Partake of" is now somewhat more common.

Persist. "Persist to rate." "Persist in rating," would be the modern expression.

Presently. "Immediately." "By and by," is the more common signification.

Proper. "Peculiar," "belonging exclusively to the thing specified."

Recollect. Sometimes used in the sense of "to bring to one's senses." "The Princess was recollected."

Reparation. "Repair." Reparation is now commonly used to mean "satisfaction for injury done."

Ruggedness. "Rudeness."

Seqŭester. "Seclude."

Subtle. "Sly."

Suffrage. "Opinions," "testimony."

Superfluities. "Excess," "overflow" (of the lake), "luxuries" ("delights and superfluities").

Transcendental. Defined by Johnson, "general; pervading many particulars." "Transcendental truths," would thus be those which have wide application.

Volent. Having wings.

II. — FATHER OF WATERS.

"The natives call the Nile Abavi, that is, the Father of Waters." — LOBO'S *Abyssinia.* The name is often applied to the Mississippi.

III. — ABYSSINIA. RASSELAS. THE HAPPY VALLEY.

For the description of Abyssinian life and scenery, Johnson depended partly upon the "Voyage to Abyssinia" of Father Lobo, partly upon his own imagination. The name Rasselas was suggested by a similar name Rassela (Ras, "a head;" sela christos, "for the sake of Christ") which occurs in Lobo's narrative. The Happy Valley was a pleasing fiction. Lobo records that "on the barren summit of Ambaguexa, in the kingdom of Amhara, the princes of the blood-royal passed their melancholy life, being guarded by officers who treated them often with great rigor and severity." The religion of the Abyssinians is a very corrupt form of Christianity. Johnson, for the sake of his story, has portrayed a state of culture and intelligence such as never existed among them. Consult the article "Abyssinia" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

IV. — SOURCE OF THE NILE.

By the explorations of Speke in 1858 and 1862, and of Stanley in 1875, the Victoria Nyanza was definitely established as the head reservoir of the Nile. As the lake has several unexplored tributaries,

one, the Alexandra Nile, pouring in more water than is carried off by the Nile itself, the old mystery cannot be said to be even yet completely solved.

V. — INUNDATIONS OF THE NILE.

"The Atbara, although so important a river in the rainy season of Abyssinia, is perfectly dry for several months during the year, and at the time I first saw it, June 13, 1861, it was a mere sheet of glaring sand; in fact a portion of the desert through which it flowed. For upwards of one hundred and fifty miles from its junction with the Nile, it is perfectly dry from the beginning of March to June. At intervals of a few miles there are pools or ponds of water left in the deep holes below the general average of the river's bed. In these pools, some of which may be a mile in length, are congregated all the inhabitants of the river, who as the stream disappears are forced to close quarters in these narrow asylums; thus, crocodiles, hippopotami, fish, and large turtle are crowded in extraordinary numbers, until the commencement of the rains in Abyssinia once more sets them at liberty by sending down a fresh volume to the river. The rainy season commences in Abyssinia in the middle of May, but the country being parched by the summer heat, the first rains are absorbed by the soil, and the torrents do not fill until the middle of June. From June to the middle of September the storms are terrific. . . . The Blue Nile and the Atbara receiving the entire drainage of Abyssinia, at the same time pour their floods into the main Nile in the middle of June. At that season the White Nile is at a considerable level, although not at its highest; and the sudden rush of water descending from Abyssinia into the main channel, already at a fair level from the White Nile, causes the annual inundation in Lower Egypt." — BAKER'S *Albert Nyanza*, vol. i., pp. 8–9. It will be noticed that Johnson's expression "solstitial rains and equinoctial hurricanes," is open to misinterpretation. The rainfall occurs only at the summer solstice, the hurricanes continue barely till the autumnal equinox.

VI. — AGE OF RASSELAS.

"Rasselas by this time was about thirty-two. He is in his twenty-sixth year at the opening of the story; he passes twenty months 'in visionary bustle:' and four months 'in resolving to lose no more time

in idle resolves.' Ten months he spent in 'fruitless researches' for means of escape, and a year with the inventor of the wings. Some months, perhaps a year, must be given to his conversations with Imlac, to digging the outlet, and to the journey to Cairo. In that town they studied the language two years before they began their 'experiments upon life.' That Shakespeare makes Hamlet thirty years old often raises wonder. It is more surprising that Rasselas should be represented as thirty-two." — HILL'S *Rasselas*, pp. 181-182.

VII. — VOLUMES IN THE MOSQUE OF MECCA.

The Mohammedan mosques, like all religious institutions east and west, have been made at times the repositories of rare and valuable manuscripts.

VIII. — POETRY.

"In the world of organic life the beautiful is that which is typical. This statement does not refer to that form of life which is most typical of the species to which it may belong. It must not be understood that the typical frog, or the typical hippopotamus, must, according to this view, be beautiful. The type which is beautiful is not that of the species or the genus, but of that form of being which these represent. That living thing is most beautiful which best manifests life; while that in which the presence of life is most obscured will be the opposite of beautiful. 'So we exterminate the deer,' exclaims Thoreau, 'and substitute the hog.' The hog is here contrasted with the deer, as the prosaic with the beautiful; and the two may serve to illustrate the point which we are considering. The wild boar, indeed, long, lank, and terrible in its fierceness, has a certain picturesqueness, at least, in its native wilds; but from the fatted hog this picturesqueness has departed. The hog, we say, is gross looking. By this we mean that in it life seems lost in matter. It seems less like a living organism than it does like a piece of awkward carpentry. It is such a shape as a boy might whittle out with his jackknife. Its cylindrical body is without longitudinal curves. At one extremity it falls off in a clumsy approach to something like a point. To the other is abruptly attached a slight curl. Whatever vital expression might come to it from eyes and mouth is lost in the puffed and swollen aspect that constitutes its whole face. Its expres-

sion is not animal, it is worse. It is that of gluttony and weak sensualism. When we say this we must remember that the sensualism which the expression of the fatted hog suggests is not that of its gluttony but of ours. The deer, on the other hand, displays the presence of life at every point. All the members of the organism flow together in graceful curves. There is nothing mechanical; there is no carpenter's work. There is simply the presence of life which has created and which animates the whole." — EVERETT'S *Poetry, Comedy, and Duty*, pp. 55–56.

IX. — STATE OF NATURE.

In his "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality," published in 1754, Rousseau bases his speculations on an imaginary being in a supposed state of nature. Morley paraphrases a portion of the Discourse as follows: —

"Let us conclude, then, that wandering in the forests, without industry, without speech, without habitation, without war, without connection of any kind, without any need of his fellows or without any desire to harm them, perhaps even without ever recognizing one of them individually, savage man, subject to few passions and sufficing to himself, had only the sentiments and the enlightenment proper to his condition; that he was only sensible of his real wants, and only looked because he thought he had an interest in seeing; and that his intelligence made no more progress than his vanity. If by chance he hit on some discovery, he was all the less able to communicate it, as he did not know even his own children. An art perished with its inventor. There was neither education nor progress; generations multiplied uselessly; and as each generation always started from the same point, centuries glided away in all the rudeness of the first ages, the race was already old, the individual remained always a child." — MORLEY'S *Rousseau*, vol. i., pp. 166–167.

Johnson's opinion of Rousseau is shown in his remark to Boswell: "Rousseau *knows* that he is talking nonsense, and laughs at the world for staring at him."

X. — SIEGE OF JERUSALEM.

"The superiority of numbers and the art of war decided for the Romans. The walls were stormed and thereafter the citadel Antonia; then, after long resistance, first the porticoes of the temple went on

fire, and further, on the 10th Ab (August), the temple itself, with all the treasures accumulated in it for six centuries. Lastly, after fighting in the streets, which lasted for a month, on the 8th Elul (September), the last resistance in the town itself was broken, and the holy Salem was razed. The bloody work had lasted for five months. The sword and the arrow, and still more famine, had claimed countless victims; the Jews killed everyone so much as suspected of deserting, and forced women and children in the city to die of hunger; the Romans just as pitilessly put to the sword the captives or crucified them." — MOMMSEN'S *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, vol. ii., p. 215.

APPENDIX A.

THE following specimens will give some idea of Johnson's powers as a poet: —

"Well tried through many a varying year
See Levett to the grave descend,
Officious, innocent, sincere,
Of every friendless name the friend.

"In misery's darkest cavern known,
His ready help was always nigh;
Where hopeless anguish poured his groan,
And lonely want retired to die.

"No summons mocked by chill delay,
No petty gain disdain'd by pride;
The modest wants of every day,
The toil of every day supplied.

"His virtues walked their narrow round,
Nor made a pause, nor left a void;
And sure the eternal Master found
The single talent well employed.

"The busy day, the peaceful night,
Unfelt, uncounted, glided by;
His frame was firm, his powers were bright,
Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

"Then, with no throbs of fiery pain,
No cold gradations of decay,
Death broke at once the vital chain,
And freed his soul the nearest way."

— *On the Death of Mr. Robert Levett.*

"On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,
How just his hopes let Swedish Charles decide;
A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,
No dangers fright him, and no labors tire;
O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,
Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain;
No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,
War sounds the trump, he rushes to the field;
Behold surrounding kings their pow'rs combine,
And one capitulate, and one resign;
Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;
'Think nothing gain'd,' he cries, 'till nought remain,
On Moscow's walls till Gothick standards fly,
And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'
The march begins in military state,
And nations on his eye suspended wait;
Stern famine guards the solitary coast,
And winter barricades the realm of frost;
He comes, nor want nor cold his course delay;—
Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day:
The vanquish'd hero leaves his broken bands,
And shows his miseries in distant lands;
Condemn'd a needy supplicant to wait,
While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.
But did not chance, at length, her error mend?
Did no subverted empire mark his end?
Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?
Or hostile millions press him to the ground?
His fall was destin'd to a barren strand,
A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;
He left the name, at which the world grew pale,
To point a moral, or adorn a tale."

— *The Vanity of Human Wishes.*

APPENDIX B.

The following prose passages, together with the letter to Lord Chesterfield, are often quoted as representing Johnson's style at its best: —

"In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed; and though no book was ever spared out of tenderness to the author, and the world is little solicitous to know whence proceeded the faults of that which it condemns; yet it may gratify curiosity to inform it that the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the soft obscurities of retirement, or under the shelter of academic bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow. It may repress the triumph of malignant criticism to observe, that if our language is not here fully displayed, I have only failed in an attempt which no human powers have hitherto completed. If the lexicons of ancient tongues, now immutably fixed, and comprised in a few volumes, be yet, after the toil of successive ages, inadequate and delusive; if the aggregated knowledge, and co-operating diligence of the Italian academicians, did not secure them from the censure of Beni; if the embodied critics of France, when fifty years had been spent upon their work, were obliged to change its economy, and give their second edition another form, I may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which, if I could obtain, in this gloom of solitude, what could it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave, and success and miscarriage are empty sounds: I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise." — *Preface to the Dictionary.*

"Of Gilbert Walmsley, thus presented to my mind, let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that at least my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

"He was of advanced age, and I was only not a boy; yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a Whig, with all the

virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honored him, and he endured me.

"He had mingled with the gay world, without exemption from its vices or its follies, but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief of Revelation was unshaken; his learning preserved his principles; he grew first regular, and then pious.

"His studies had been so various that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know he could at least tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now passes in which I have not some advantage from his friendship.

"At this man's table I enjoyed many cheerful and instructive hours, with companions such as are not often found; with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened life; with Dr. James, whose skill in physic will be long remembered; and with David Garrick, whom I hoped to have gratified with this character of our common friend. But what are the hopes of man! I am disappointed by that stroke of death which has eclipsed the gayety of nations, and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure." — *Life of Edmund Smith.*

"When I look back upon resolutions of improvement and amendment, which have year after year, been made and broken, either by negligence, forgetfulness, vicious idleness, casual interruption, or morbid infirmity; when I find that so much of my life has stolen unprofitably away, and that I can descry by retrospection scarcely a few single days properly and vigorously employed; why do I yet resolve to try again? I try, because reformation is necessary and despair is criminal; I try, in humble hope of the help of God." — *Meditations.*

APPENDIX C.

"If the question be put, who in our language has said and written the greatest number of right things on moral subjects, there can, we suppose, be no hesitation in saying it was Dr. Johnson. Men can be

named who have uttered deeper truths; there are many who offer more beautiful reflections; and he never set himself to say tender things; to increase our positive knowledge by additions to science was not his task. But for bringing out on all questions of morals the appropriate, the irrefragably true conclusion within the accepted limits of our common beliefs, Johnson is the best man we have to show. . . .

"There is a common notion, that the peculiarity of the Johnsonian style is easily understood, — that it lay simply in putting big words for little ones and using very long sentences. Did not Garrick say, that, if Johnson wrote a fable in which little fishes were the speakers, he would make them talk like whales? Are there not examples of it given in Macaulay? Some truth there of course is in this, but it also is true that for every sentence containing the big words we could find a paragraph of Johnson's writing in which they are not; and that, while he has sentences as short as anybody, — very many shorter than most writers, — the length of not a few of the long ones is a mere matter of punctuation. Lord Macaulay no more invented the printer's full-stop than Napoleon first found out field artillery, but each used the respective weapon in a number and with an effect which nobody had dared to do before them. By putting a period for a colon, sometimes commas for semicolons, the cumbrousness of many of the Johnsonian passages would change into light, easy reading. . . .

"Dr. Johnson could think a thought into finer separate parts than anybody. An idea which occurs to ordinary people in a block was in his mind a thing of joints and members. Two or three examples will best show this. In *Rambler* No. 14, when writing of the difference between theory and practice, he says: 'A man proposes his schemes of life in a state of abstraction and disengagement, exempt from the enticements of hope, the solicitations of affection, the importunities of appetite, or the depressions of fear.' Opening again at the seventeenth paper of the same work, we find a list of divisions nearly as numerous and exact: 'The extensive influence of greatness, the glitter of wealth, the praises of admirers, and the attendance of suppliants, appear vain and empty things when the last hour approaches.' Turning at random to 'Rasselas,' on the chance page we read: "He projected the relief of distress, the detection of fraud, the defeat of oppression, and the diffusion of happiness.' . . .

"But fully to give the secret of the Johnsonian mannerism, alike in its merits and in its faults, a great falling-off in the literary emotion in his case has to be pointed out. At times, his words, like those of every notable writer, take on an activity of their own. Whenever this happens with anyone, it is either much for the better or much for the worse. The best passages in our chief prose writers, no less than in our poets, are where the phraseology has become oracular in this fashion; the verbiage grows wiser than the thoughts, more tender than the feelings; and the man who falls into this trance of language, is himself the most amazed at the glory and the beauty of the utterance. But, in truth, the words, in prose at any rate, can only be trusted a single inch in advance of the thinking; the thoughts must perpetually overtake and guide the ecstasy, while they take fire from it. Here Johnson was at fault. His words would begin this automatic stir, and do so with an unquestionable air of nobleness, but the literary emotion ran out almost at once, leaving only a mechanical movement to go on. The phrases by inflating into bigness did but mimic the happiness they should have had; doing this easily, consistently, perfectly, from the wealth of verbiage he had amassed in dictionary truckling. But the delicate sense of fitness was lacking, all the fine adjustments of propriety had ceased to act. Instead of these you have the resonant pomp going starkly forward, increasing, unabashed by laughter, growing every moment more out of place, until it ends preposterously, in a huge monumental shame of language, which time cannot decay. In this way, for instance, he comes to speak of brewers' vats as being the potentialities of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice, or, in his happiest, most pardonable miscarriage by this fault, affirms that the death of Garrick eclipsed the gayety of nations. A few instances of this grotesqueness have been seized on, and have been still further exaggerated. After all, they have not very much real value, for they hide rather than illustrate the broad defect of Johnson's work. This is an over-activity of the intellect always going on. Everything is reasoned about, and only reasoned about. The feelings are never allowed to mass themselves sufficiently to tell; he forever dissects them away by perpetual small variations of the topic. In the very worst examples, even the reasoning itself becomes formal, going on working when there is not an iota of sentiment left. It does so with the most amazing needless-

ness, as though ratiocination was a new discovery, requiring that every possible inference and conclusion should be explicitly given as novelties. This issues in sentences which might have been constructed on the monotonous plan of the 'buts' in Solomon's proverbs. Here is one: 'Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to please them; but he that believes his own powers are strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself.' There are numbers of such sentences. It resembles reasoning by the syllogism fully drawn out, to which the present shortened patience of mankind is not equal. Very frequently Johnson puts the whole of the matter into words, including those parts we habitually take for granted, and suppress in the statement. When this is found out it is resented. Not only is it felt to be a waste of time, it is an obvious arraignment of our mental faculties. Men, when told that twice seven make fourteen, do not like its being added that this is so because three and four are seven. They think they have a right to be credited with knowing as much as that. Indeed, a deeper instinct than that of vanity is at work in the objection. The human mind can only stretch its attention between certain limits. It is but by a progressive dropping out from our statements of what everybody comes mechanically to know, assuming it as commonplace, that we can make progress in our ordinary affirmations, pushing them on another step by drawing in the prior links. Johnson failed greatly here. He is continually telling us what was already in our thoughts sufficiently, and which has the merit of never needing again to be said in this world." — "JOHNSON WITHOUT BOSWELL," by W. CYPLES, in *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxxii., pp. 708-712.

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